

ARAB TIMES



NO. 7507

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, MARCH 16-17, 1989

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24 PAGES 150 FILS

18 Kuwaitis among 33 coup plotters

Trial date will be set soon

KUWAIT, March 15, (KUNA): Thirty-three people, including 18 Kuwaitis, face charges ranging from attempting to topple the government to spying, a spokesman for the state prosecutor said yesterday.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Arab Times has brought out a 7-page (11-17) supplement on the 10th Kuwait International Rally.

Iran-East bloc ties

NICOSIA, March 15, (AP): Hashemi Rafsanjani, Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, said today that the exchange of messages between Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev paved the way for the expansion of Iran's relations with the Eastern bloc.

Iran's official news agency said Rafsanjani made the remark during a meeting in Tehran with Milko Balev, chairman of Bulgarian National Assembly's foreign committee.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze held a rare audience with ailing Khomeini during a visit to Tehran on Feb. 26.

During the audience, Khomeini called for the expansion of ties between Tehran and Moscow, according to the agency.



People inspect cars damaged by Tuesday's shelling in Beirut. (Reuter wirephoto)

Halt clashes, Lebanese told

Beirut in agony

in the Christian-Muslim battles in Lebanon.

"Syria is not a party to the fighting in Lebanon," he said between sessions of an Islamic foreign ministers' meeting in Lebanon.

In Beirut, occasional bursts of machine-gun fire replaced savage shelling by Muslims and Christians today as Lebanon's battered capital lay gripped in fear of all-out war.

A car packed with a small amount of explosives blew up near the West Beirut campus of the American University of Beirut (AUB) and wounded three people, police said. The blast, yards from a Syrian Army checkpoint, also damaged six parked cars, police said.

The statement was issued by Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Sabah, who chairs the panel that includes the foreign ministers of Jordan, the UAE, Sudan, Tunisia and North Yemen, as well as Arab League Secretary-General Chadi Khilji.

The statement said an immediate halt to the clashes would allow the committee to direct all efforts to resolve the crisis in accordance with the principles laid down by the 22-member Arab League.

These principles, the statement added, would achieve peace and prosperity for the Lebanese people.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara denied today that his country played any role

(Continued on Page 3)

Iran denies it has violated ceasefire

NICOSIA, March 15, (AP): Iran has again denied Iraqi charges that Iranian troops violated the Gulf war ceasefire along the Iran-Iraq border, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported today.

The agency, quoted in an unnamed source at Iran's armed forces command headquarters as saying the ceasefire was violated by Iraqi forces late on Monday night when they shelled three Iranian cities across the southern border.

The source said that Iraqi forces opened fire on the city of Shalamcheh at 1730 GMT, and then extended the shelling to the port of Khorramshahr at 2200 GMT, IRNA reported.

The two belligerents agreed in January to form a joint military committee to help the UN observers consolidate the ceasefire agreement.

The spokesman said some of the accused — 13 of whom are at large — may receive the death penalty or be sentenced to life in prison. Two of the defendants have been released on bail, he added.

The suspects are accused of belonging to "illegal groups ... among whose purposes was the promulgation of principles which seek to demolish the basic system (of Kuwait) through illegal means and demolishing of the social and economic fabric of the country by force..."

Ideologies

The groups also called publicly and through writings, sketches and photos for the toppling of the regime as well as for destructive ideologies while defaming HH the Amir.

Some of the suspects were also accused of divulging secrets of defence, embezzling public money and collusion to commit crimes including the assassination of public figures and their families in Kuwait.

The spokesman said the head of the State Security Court will soon set a trial date.

The accused are:

1. Sami Jaber Abbas Al Badri, 43 alias Abu Al Hasan, Iraqi, former librarian at the Kuwait University Medical Library, presently living in Iran.

2. Abdulla Issa Ahmad Fayrouz, 25, Kuwaiti, an engineer at the Ministry of Communications, in jail.

3. Abdulla Ibrahim Husain, 25 alias Abdullah Dasthi, Kuwaiti, presently living in Iran.

4. Muhsen Al Faqih, 35 alias Abu Zaher, Iranian, presently living in Iran.

5. Hisham Abdul Razzaq Mhaisan, 27 alias Mohamad Ali Mahdi, Iraqi, director at the Kuwait Cleaning Co. — in jail.

6. Hamad Hussain Ali Sabti, 36, Kuwaiti, teacher at the Ministry of Education, in jail.

7. Khaled Abdul Karim Taha, 29, Iraqi, engineer, presently living in Iran.

8. Mohammed Abdul Amin Al Ali, 33, Lebanese, computer engineer at a company in Sharq, in jail.

9. Tareq Abdul Jalil Mohammad, 45 alias Abu Zaid, Iraqi, electrician, presently living in Iran.

10. Abdul Zahra Hawali Makhmoudi, 26, Iranian, former employee at a private company in Kuwait, presently living in Iran.

For the first time in Lebanon's civil war, there is no one capable of mediating a lasting ceasefire. We're back at square one. We're back to April 13, 1975," said one pro-Syrian Muslim politician, referring to the date Lebanon's civil war started.

(Continued on Page 3)

Religious fervour

Return of Quran greeted with joy

TASHKENT, UST, March 15, (Agencies): With tears and cries of "God is Great," several thousand Muslims greeted the return yesterday of a 7th century Quran in a display of religious fervour seldom seen in the officially atheist Soviet Union.

Crowds pressed in on a cordon of police and engulfed a half-dozen believers who carried the holy book on their shoulders 150 yards (metres) from a religious congress to the Higher Islamic Institute in Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

One young man leapt from a low porch toward the two-foot-square (.18-metre-square) book as it was carried through the courtyard below. He touched his hands to his face in a sign of reverence before the crowd swallowed him up.

Cries of "God is Great" echoed along the book's path into the courtyard of the institute, and believers wiped tears from their eyes as they watched the Quran pass.

The Uzbekistan government turned the Quran of Caliph Osman over to Muslim authorities at the opening of a two-day congress that elected a new mufti, or religious leader, for predominantly Muslim Soviet Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

The two belligerents agreed in January to form a joint military committee to help the UN observers consolidate the ceasefire agreement.



An act of terror

Iranian Mugela, 20, a Basque university student appeared at a news conference in Bilbao, Spain, after she was attacked on Monday by two men and a woman who beat her and carved the letters GAL into her face. GAL stand for Anti-Terrorist Liberation Group, an organisation which claimed to have killed 23 Basques living in France to avenge attacks by the Basque separatist group ETA. Mugela was also attacked in November 1988 by people who carved GAL into her hand. (Reuter wirephoto)

Kuwait to test fruit from Chile for cyanide

By Diane Diaz
Arab Times staff

IMPORTED fruit from Chile will be tested for cyanide poisoning and other contamination before being distributed to the local market, a Kuwaiti government source said yesterday.

The decision to test Chilean fruit arriving in Kuwait comes in response to reports that the United States found cyanide in two seedless red grapes while checking random samples of fruit from Chile.

The government source, who spoke to the Arab Times on the condition of anonymity, said he learned about the cyanide scare from press reports yesterday morning. He said he passed the information on to various health authorities and the decision was made to start the testing immediately.

The official could not say what would happen to Chilean fruit already on store shelves in this country.

Apples and grapes are the fruits most commonly imported to Kuwait from Chile, he said. Information about other fresh fruit from that country was not made available.

A Chilean diplomat based in Syria told the Arab Times that countries which import Chilean fruit should examine it as a precaution.

Ali Jijal, second secretary of the Chilean embassy in Damascus, said the incident in the US was probably isolated.

Jijal, member of the diplomatic mission that covers Kuwait, said he believes chemicals used to ripen fruit could have been misinterpreted as poison.

Agencies add: The discovery of the two cyanide-laced grapes has triggered a massive removal of Chilean fruit from market shelves around the world.

The United States, Canada, Japan, West Germany, Denmark and Hong Kong are among the countries that have pulled Chilean produce out of stores.

Authorities in many of those countries are warning consumers not to eat fruit already purchased unless they are certain that it did not come from Chile.

In Brussels, the European Economic Community put all member nations on alert. Officials in France and the Netherlands said they were conducting tests on Chilean fruits.

The cyanide discovery came two weeks after a man phoned the US embassy in Santiago saying fruit for export would be poisoned. That call and a second one were viewed as probable hoaxes, but the US intensified inspections of Chilean fruits as a precaution.

(Continued on Page 3)

Israeli-PLO talks needed

WASHINGTON, March 15, (Agencies): US Secretary of State James Baker, hinting at a shift in US policy in the Middle East, says "meaningful" negotiations on the Palestinian problem might require Israel to talk to the PLO.

But in another development, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens accused the PLO of committing the "worst atrocities we've ever seen since World War II." The Israeli official also said the US dialogue with Yasser Arafat's organisation had strengthened the PLO's hand.

Baker testified before a House of Representatives appropriations sub-committee, while Arens, who is on a three-day visit to Washington, held a news conference.

Baker said US policy seeks to promote direct negotiations between Israel and Palestinian Arabs that "can be meaningful."

"Now if you can't have direct negotiations that do not involve negotiations with the PLO, I suppose we would then have to see negotiations between Israelis and representatives of the PLO," Baker said.

Emphasis

He added: "It may be that you can have meaningful negotiations that do not involve the PLO. It may be that you can't. Our policy is simply that we think there need to be direct negotiations which are meaningful between Israelis and Palestinians."

Baker has recently put increasing emphasis on a need for Israeli talks with Palestinians.

Arens declined to comment on Baker's statement regarding the meaningful negotiations and the prospect of Israeli-PLO talks, saying he had not heard it directly.

Arens ruled out face-to-face contacts with the PLO.

He told the Washington Institute on Middle East Affairs: "The PLO wants to impose itself as a negotiating partner. That would constitute a form of recognition for the Palestinian organization."

"My own view is if we gave that recognition (to the PLO), it would be a one-way street," he added. "It would be the beginning of the end for Jordan and the present ruler of Jordan (King Hussein). It would be the beginning, or rather the continuation, of the subversion of Israel."

Arens insisted the proper negotiating partner for Israel would be the government of Jordan or prominent Palestinians in the occupied territories.

The two belligerents agreed in January to form a joint military committee to help the UN observers consolidate the ceasefire agreement.

Ban Rushdie book: Sabah

Call to give OIC seat to mujahedeen

Riyadh, March 15, (Agencies): Kuwait has urged Islamic states to boycott the publishers of Salman Rushdie's novel The Satanic Verses, widely condemned in the Muslim world as blasphemous to Islam.

Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed told an Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) foreign ministers' meeting that all Islamic states should ban the book, work to prevent its printing and distribution worldwide and boycott its publishers. Viking Penguin Books.

The oppressive distortion campaign against Islam represented in a book that distorts and slanders the truth of our faith ... calls for a decisive position," he said yesterday.

Riyadh has called on the OIC meeting to endorse the order of its spiritual leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, for Rushdie's killing, but delegates say a majority of Islamic states prefer milder action.

Authorities

Iranian delegation leader Mohammad Taskhiri angrily complained that Rushdie has "insulted all the Islamic values, the Holy Quran and the wives of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)."

Taskhiri insisted that the Indian-born British author be judged according to the sharia, which he said requires the death sentence for blasphemy.

"That would be the end of our request," said Taskhiri. "It is impossible for Iran to change its basic position on the issue."

Conference sources said a number of delegates were trying to work out a compromise between Iran and Saudi Arabia on the issue. Saudi Arabia insists he be denounced and given a chance to do penance.

The conference is to listen to Taskhiri explain his country's stance on the Rushdie affair during

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(Continued on Page 4)

They went into a frenzy when Singh rejected their demands for the release of a judicial report into the killing and the Speaker suspended most opposition members for the rest of the week.

The Indian Express newspaper yesterday quoted what it said were secret documents from a judicial inquiry into the Indira Gandhi killing that pointed "a needle of suspicion" at Dhawan, her long-time secretary.

It said Dhawan suddenly changed Indira's schedule on the day she was killed by two Sikh bodyguards as she walked through the garden of her home and that he was responsible for the killers' assignment.

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The Indian Express newspaper yesterday

AIDS builds resistance to AZT

SAN DIEGO, California, March 15. (AP): AIDS patients treated with AZT, the only approved anti-AIDS drug, appear to develop drug-resistant strains of the AIDS virus over time, researchers said.

While AIDS patients were advised to continue taking AZT, researchers said the finding suggests that AIDS, like cancer and tuberculosis, may be treated most effectively with a

combination of drugs.

"Many of us who have had experience with chemotherapy expected that this was going to happen," said Dr Douglas Richman of the University of California at San Diego.

"I am convinced that AZT will be one of the lynchpins of combination (AIDS) chemotherapy for a long period of time. What we need is to get some more drugs to add to it," said

Richman. Burroughs Wellcome Co., the maker of AZT or zidovudine, reported the finding in letters sent to doctors in 26 countries.

Company officials said they consulted with outside experts about the impact of its findings and concluded that there is no reason for AIDS patients to halt AZT treatment.

US halts imports of assault rifles

WASHINGTON, March 15. (Reuters): The United States has suspended imports of more than 110,000 rapid-fire semi-automatic assault weapons, increasingly used by drug dealers and other criminals, amid a public clamour over US violent crime.

The action comes less than two months after an emotionally disturbed man used a Chinese-made AK-47 rifle to spray bullets at children playing in a schoolyard in Stockton, California. Five were killed while 29 others and a teacher were wounded.

The indefinite suspension, announced last night by US drug policy chief William Bennett, applies to all semiautomatic assault rifles — such as AK-47s and Uzi carbines — pending a review to determine whether they are suitable for "sporting purposes". Automatic versions of the weapons are outlawed.

The action follows mushrooming imports of the powerful weapons. Since 1986, when the government approved the import of 4,000 assault-type weapons, the number has jumped to 40,000 in 1987 and 44,000 last year.

"The immediate effect of this action is to suspend indefinitely the importation of well over 110,000 semiautomatic assault-type weapons for which import permissions are pending," Bennett said in a statement.

Backing

President Bush, a hunter and member of the National Rifle Association (NRA) pro-gun organisation which opposes any gun restrictions, was described as supporting the decision, but was not directly involved in reaching it.

"The President feels the review is necessary and that we should enforce existing laws," said White House spokesman Marvin Fitzwater.

Although the White House was trying to shy away from involvement in the decision, it will bear the brunt of the debate — certain to stir emotions on both sides of the issue.

Gun control activists have urged a ban on semiautomatic weapons, citing their use by drug dealers and other criminals, while gun advocates argue that a permanent ban would deny Americans their constitutional right to bear arms.

NRA executive director Wayne Lapierre said the ban would at least "put a stop to the media hysteria" surrounding the weapons and provide an atmosphere for a reasoned discussion.

The suspension was imposed by Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, whose department oversees firearms control, but had been pushed by Bennett well before he was sworn in on Monday as co-ordinator of federal anti-drug efforts.

"Those may or may not be treaty compliant," he said.

Star Wars will violate treaty

'SDI budget is too much'

WASHINGTON, March 15. (UPI): The new director of the "Star Wars" programme has acknowledged that development of the system would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, but said tests over the next two years will comply with the pact.

The US-Soviet treaty allows each nation to have only a limited anti-missile defence — 100 interceptors protecting a particular area. The Soviets have a site ringing Moscow — the United States has none.

At the same time, Democratic and Republican congressmen told Monahan that President Reagan's request for \$5.6 billion in 1990 for Star Wars, formally known as the Strategic Defence Initiative or SDI, is too much.

"Chances of achieving this \$5.6 billion level are extremely remote," said chairman Ronald Dellums, Democrat-California. He suggested a figure around \$4 billion, slightly more than Congress appropriated for this year.

Representative William Dickinson, Republican-Alabama, the senior Republican on the panel, agreed and said, "the Reagan budget ... is not practical."

Monahan, who replaced retired Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson this year as chief of SDI, said the future of Star Wars is part of President Bush's strategic review, expected to be completed in May, and that the \$5.6 billion budget request "is probably going to be changed."

Review

The general, testifying before Congress for the first time on SDI declined to answer questions about Bush's policy, saying "the President's views will come out as that (strategic) review is completed."

Monahan described the programme's plans for a defence against nuclear missiles and said that "a lot of technical advances have been made" to bolster the military's confidence that "strategic defences will be feasible."

The current plan envisions deploying a phase one system of sensors, tracking satellites and both ground-based and space-based rocket interceptors in which the rockets would locate, track and collide with missiles to destroy them in space. It would be completed by 1999 at an estimated cost of \$69 billion.

Space-based lasers would be added to a phase two system in the 21st century.

Monahan, giving the congressmen a detailed overview of the programme, said the sensors that would detect an enemy missile in launch phase would be the first part of the system to be built and they could come as early as next year.

"Those may or may not be treaty compliant," he said.

"We really need to start work on what we're going to do about the ABM treaty," Air Force Lt. Gen. George Monahan testified Tuesday before the house armed services committee's research and development subcommittee.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Empress dies



Empress Zita

ZIZERS, Switzerland, March 15. (AP): Austria's last empress, Zita, who played a historic role in a failed attempt to end fighting in World War I, died early Tuesday. She was 96. She survived by almost 67 years her husband, Charles I, who headed the multilingual Austrian-Hungarian dual monarchy until agreeing to "temporarily relinquish" his imperial rights after the Allied victory in World War I.

Born May 9, 1892, in Pianore Castle, near Viareggio, Italy, the former princess of Bourbon-Parme was related to several European royal families. Her ancestors included France's Sun King, Louis XIV.

The heart of Zita will be removed in accordance with family tradition and placed separately in a shrine alongside those of other Habsburg rulers. It will be taken to Chur, Switzerland, near her exile home.

Meniring

WAPATO, Washington, March 15. (AP): Washington's worst outbreak of meningococcal disease in more than a decade has caused four deaths this year and has health officials considering a costly countrywide vaccination programme.

Seventeen people have contracted some form of meningococcal disease, including six who got meningitis, inflammation of the membranes that envelop the brain and the spinal cord.

"People are freaking out about this all over," said Marcy Smith, whose two-year-old daughter was one of about 400 people vaccinated Monday.

Fatal driving

MOUNT PLEASANT, New York, March 15. (AP): An unemployed carpenter was killed when he lost control of his car as he berated the driver of a limousine for cutting him off in traffic, state police said today.

Paul Lasalle, 36, of Pleasantville, died from injuries suffered when his car swerved off the highway Monday while he was yelling at the driver, said trooper Allen Fox.

He said Lasalle's car swerved onto the grass median, slid about 50 metres, flipped and slid another 200 feet (60 metres).

Negligence charge

LONDON, March 15. (AP): A US woman whose husband died in the Lockerbie plane crash released a US document on Thursday that warned of a terrorist threat and called a British government minister negligent for not acting on it.

Elizabeth Delude-Dix, whose Irish husband was killed when a Pan Am jetliner exploded Dec. 21 over Scotland, called for an investigation of the US warning. An opposition Labour Party spokesman echoed her demand.

Copter crashes

NAHA, Japan, March 15. (UPI): A US Air Force HH-3 helicopter crashed into the East China Sea off Okinawa while on a training flight last night, killing three of the five crewmembers aboard, military authorities said today.

Two survivors were rescued from the crash site 10 miles south of Ieshima Island by a second HH-3 helicopter taking part in the exercise.

A spokesman for US forces Japan, said the bodies of two of the crew members were recovered this morning by rescue personnel from Kaduna Air Force base on Okinawa. The body of the third victim was yet to be found, he said.

Comedian robbed

WEST HOLLYWOOD, California, March 15. (UPI): Comedian Don Rickles and his wife were robbed at gunpoint of their 1988 Jaguar last night as the couple parked the luxury car on a west Hollywood street, sheriff's deputies said.

Neither Rickles, who was a passenger in the car, nor his wife, Barbara, were injured in the holdup, as they parked the car to visit their daughter who lives nearby. Sheriff's Sgt. Arthur Ames said.

Newton jailed

OAKLAND, Calif., March 15. (Reuters): The co-founder of the militant Black Panther group pleaded no contest Tuesday to a charge of misappropriating public funds and was sentenced to six months in jail.

Huey Newton, 47, led the black rights organisation from its founding in 1966 until he disbanded it in 1982.

He was accused of misappropriating about \$15,000 in public funds intended for a Panther-operated public school in Oakland, said prosecutor Eugene Kaster.

Dog at birth

SURREY, British Columbia, March 15. (AP): The new father was fine, but the dog twice got sick and had to leave the delivery room.

Rick Oakes and his guide dog, Bryor, were there when Whitney Leanne Oakes was born at Grace Hospital in Vancouver.

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جدة

INTERNATIONAL

18 Kuwaitis among 33 coup plotters

(Continued from Page 1)

11. Mohammed Hussain Najah Ashkanani, 28, Kuwaiti, engineer at the Communication Ministry, in jail.

12. Khaled Ahmad Abdul Mehsin Behbehani, 27, Kuwaiti, teacher at Zid Bin Al Hareet Primary School, in jail.

13. Khaled Abdul Razzaq Husain Mohammed Al Baloushi, 27, Kuwaiti, mechanic at Kuwait Airways, in jail.

14. Ismael Ghiloum Mohamed Hassan Jamal, 23, Kuwaiti, presently living in Iran.

15. Yousef Hussain Mohamed Baqir, 35, Kuwaiti, in jail.

16. Ridha Baquer Ridha Behbehani, 37, Kuwaiti, computer operator at Loans and Credit Bank, in jail.

17. Fadel Abbas Abdullah Mohammed Jarkhi, 28, Kuwaiti, security and safety officer at Mubarak Al Kabir Hospital, in jail.

18. Mohammed Ahmad Ali Al Khodari, 40, Kuwaiti, supervisor at the Ministry of Education, in jail.

19. Khaled Jaber Nayef Abdullah Al Atbi, 20, Kuwaiti, student at the Technology Institute, in jail.

20. Abbas Husain Bin Nakhi, 29, Kuwaiti, former police officer, presently living in Iran.

21. Saleh Ali Hamza Ismael Ibrahim, 20, Kuwaiti, senior official at the College of Education, in jail.

22. Sulaiman Mohammed Yousif Karam Jirkhi, 25, Kuwaiti, electrician at the National Petroleum Co., in jail.

23. Ahmed Abdul Ridha Yousif Buabas, 25, Kuwaiti, employee at the Social and Labour Affairs Ministry, in jail.

24. Samir Ali Awadha, 27, Lebanese, engineer at a private company in Qurtuba, in jail.

25. Husam Sadeq Kashoush, 27, Iraqi, engineer at the Chinese security forces in Lhasa. (Reuter wirephoto)

Botha returns to work as power struggle deepens

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, March 15. (AP): Embattled President P.W. Botha returned to work Wednesday after an eight-week recuperation from a stroke, meeting with his cabinet ministers after they signalled their wish for a new head of state.

Reporters were kept at a distance as Botha arrived at his office shortly before the cabinet meeting began.

Botha has yet to comment publicly on a declaration by the National Party parliamentary caucus, including the full cabinet, that it wants the new party leader. Education Minister Frederik de Klerk, to be president.

Botha, 73, resigned as party leader on Feb. 2, two weeks after his stroke, and was succeeded by de Klerk, 52.

Misconduct

Both said he wanted to distance the presidency from partisan politics so he could be more of a symbol of national unity, but

the caucus announced Monday that it wanted the party leader to be head of state.

The caucus has no formal means of forcing Botha out of the presidency, barring evidence of misconduct or incapacity which could prompt impeachment proceedings.

Thus Botha has the option of remaining in office against the wishes of his party or deciding on his own to step aside after handing the government since 1978.

The power struggle intensified Sunday, when Botha arranged an interview with the state-controlled television network and

said he would not call an early election this year.

The next election does not have to be held until March 1990. Botha's statement, made without consulting party leaders, quashed hopes that he would retire in the next few months in conjunction with an early election.

Greek minister quits over scandal

ATHENS, March 15. (Reuter): A \$200-million bank scandal in Greece has forced the Socialist government's second-in-command to resign.

Agiamenon Koutsogiorgas, Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou's number two and his personal friend, resigned on Tuesday night following a barrage of criticism over the government's handling of the affair.

It was the second time Koutsogiorgas had resigned a senior ministerial position since the scandal broke in October and the latest in a series of problems for Papandreou, who had just survived a no-confidence vote in parliament.

The Socialists, in power since 1981, have plummeted in the opinion polls following a series of scandals and questions about Papandreou's health and private life.

In his letter of resignation Koutsogiorgas said he had justified the government's handling of the banking scandal and it was now for the Greek people "to judge all of us in the upcoming national elections," scheduled for June 18.

Koutsogiorgas had resigned as justice minister and deputy premier on Nov. 11 after being blamed by the press for the disappearance of the Greek-American tycoon George Koskotas, the central figure in the bank scandal.

Koskotas fled Greece on Nov. 3 after being charged with embezzling millions of dollars from his privately owned Bank of Crete.

Kremlin expels US diplomat

Tit-for-tat move

MOSCOW, March 15. (AP): The Soviets today accused a US military attache of spying and ordered him expelled, a move that follows Washington's expulsion last week of a Soviet officer allegedly caught trying to buy computer secrets.



100 detained

Policewomen arrest a Tibetan protester in New Delhi for blocking traffic. About 100 demonstrators were arrested during a protest against the recent killing of Tibetans by Chinese security forces in Lhasa. (Reuter wirephoto)

Exchanges at 1987 plenary session revealed

Yeltsin criticised on eve of Soviet polls

MOSCOW, March 15. (AP): In remarks that cost him his job as Communist Party boss of Moscow, Boris Yeltsin told a 1987 party meeting that faith in Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms was waning, according to a transcript released yesterday.

He also said the Soviet leader had become the object of "intolerable" glorification.

The published report, issued by the party, also contained more than 40 pages of attacks Gorbachev and other leaders made against Yeltsin. A US political scientist said its release 17 months after the event appeared designed to hurt Yeltsin as he tried a political comeback.

Yeltsin, 58, is campaigning in the March 26 elections that will choose the membership of a new national assembly.

Many of the exchanges at the closed-door plenary meeting of the Communist Party's central committee on Oct. 21, 1987, were echoed at later public meetings, but the transcript revealed new details.

It contained the first confirmation of Western press reports that Yeltsin criticised not only Yegor K. Ligachev, reputedly a conservative force on the ruling Politburo, but also Gorbachev, who brought him into the Kremlin leadership.

Yeltsin, former party boss in the Ural Mountains region of Sverdlovsk, was named Moscow party chief in December 1985 and a non-voting Politburo member two months later. He lost those

posts as a result of his remarks at the October 1987 plenum.

An American political scientist affiliated with Duke University and the independent Brookings Institution, a US institute that sponsors foreign policy research, said in an interview that other motives were at work.

"It's aimed at discrediting Yeltsin," said Jerry Hough, Moscow to attend a series of seminars with American correspondents. He said the transcript was "damning" for Yeltsin because it portrays him as inept just as he is trying to win a seat in the new Congress of People's Deputies.

At the central committee meeting, Yeltsin said that despite promises of improvements from Gorbachev's reforms, "nothing has changed from the point of view of the style of work of the central committee secretariat and the style of work of comrade Ligachev."

In a separate development, thousands of Russians and other non-Estonians marched in Tallinn yesterday and threatened a general strike if Estonian nationalism and "creeping counter-revolution," journalists there said.

Maarika Saarna, a reporter with state-owned Estonian radio, put the number of demonstrators in the Estonian capital at 30,000. Police said 50,000 people turned out, and organisers claimed from 80,000 to 100,000 participants. Finnish radio reported from Tallinn.

Missile destroyed airliner'

ROME, March 15. (Reuter): A judicial report has concluded that an air-to-air missile brought down an Italian airliner that crashed in 1980 killing all 81 people on board, newspapers reported today.

Most Italian papers carried the finding, apparently leaked from a report drawn up by six crash and explosives experts for investigating magistrate Vittorio Bacarelli.

Bacarelli is expected shortly to conclude his judicial probe into the crash, whose cause has remained one of Italy's most disturbing unsolved mysteries for nine years.

The newspaper reports said the experts had been unable to identify the nationality of the fighter plane which launched the missile on the night of June 27, 1980, partly because of mysterious gaps in military radar records.

No confirmation of the reports was immediately available from judicial officials.

Richard Gilbert rejected the Soviet charges against Van Gundy, saying they were "unwarranted, inappropriate, without justification and certainly in no way in keeping with the positive tone of the US-Soviet relationship."

Gilbert, the embassy press attache, denied the 42-year-old US Army officer had engaged in activities inconsistent with his work as a diplomat and suggested the Soviet action was simply in retaliation for the US expulsion of Pakhtusov.

Van Gundy declined to answer questions from reporters as he walked from lunch at the new US embassy compound to his office in the old US embassy.

"No comment," said Van Gundy, who wore a tan raincoat and black cap.

He specifically refused to comment on Gerasimov's allegation that "warnings had already been issued to the lieutenant colonel."

"The US administration is revealing its foreign policy, and we have this problem of spy mania," Gerasimov told reporters.

Heat device may have set off bomb

SAN DIEGO, March 15. (Reuter): A heat-sensitive device may have detonated the bomb that destroyed the van driven by the wife of the captain of the USS Vincennes, a newspaper reported yesterday.

The Los Angeles Times quoted federal sources as saying the device appeared to have set off one or two pipe bombs placed under the van, directly below the driver's seat. The vehicle's engine heat would have triggered the device.

An FBI spokesman refused to confirm the report.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has revealed little about its investigation into Friday's bombing in San Diego of the van driven by the wife of captain Will Rogers.

It is being treated as a possible terrorist act in retaliation for the downing of an Iranian airliner last July by the Vincennes.

Shaw predicted.

The shuttle astronauts were assured there was no safety concern, but they were asked to conserve electricity. The crew scurried around to turn off lights and computers not in use.

Unless tests showed that the electrical system was sound, Discovery could land on Friday, after four days in orbit rather than the planned five.

The problem tank, filled with supercold liquid hydrogen, is one

of three that supplies Discovery's fuel cells, a type of generator that combines hydrogen and oxygen to make electricity and pure water. If the tank cannot be used, it would cut supplies for the fuel cell by a third. This would not give enough electrical power for five days in space, plus the two days kept in reserve for contingencies.

For their second morning in space, the astronauts were busy even before mission control gave them a formal wake up call.

Astronauts asked to conserve power

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida, March 15. (AP): Discovery's lights were dimmed and some computer screens were darkened today as engineers decided if a hydrogen tank problem was serious enough to bring the five-man crew home a day early.

Mission control engineers made plans today to test heaters in the hydrogen tank, which is part of the shuttle's electrical generating system.

"I think things will work out just fine," flight director Chuck

Turkey wants to end Cyprus issue'

WASHINGTON, March 15. (AP): US Secretary of State James Baker has said that US officials are convinced the Turkish government wants a settlement to end the 15-year division of the island of Cyprus.

Baker told the House appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations that the administration of President Bush continued to support UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in his efforts to reach a settlement between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island.

"We think that the United Nations, and the secretary-general, is particularly well positioned to seek an accommodation between the parties there," Baker said. "And we'd like to support that effort in every way we could."

"This subject came up during the course of my visit to Ankara and to Athens when I made my trip to NATO capitals (last month)," he said. "It was raised as well, and discussed when the President met Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in Tokyo. Baker said.

Baker was appearing before the subcommittee to support the administration's foreign aid bill, which includes aid for Cyprus, Greece and Turkey as in previous years. The subcommittee plays a major role in shaping the foreign aid package.

He was asked whether the administration planned to exert any pressure on Turkey to make it more willing to compromise on Cyprus.

Minister Turgut Ozal in Tokyo.

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In his letter of resignation Koutsogiorgas said he had justified the government's handling of the banking scandal and it was now for the Greek people "to judge all of us in the upcoming national elections," scheduled for June 18.

Koutsogiorgas had resigned as justice minister and deputy premier on Nov. 11 after being blamed by the press for the disappearance of the Greek-American tycoon George Koskotas, the central figure in the bank scandal.

Koskotas fled Greece on Nov. 3 after being charged with embezzling millions of dollars from his privately owned Bank of Crete.

Dick Cheney

On the opening day of hearings on Tuesday, Cheney submitted a letter from his cardiologist, Dr Allan M. Ross of the Georgia Washington University Medical Centre, stating that the nominee is "fit to accept any position requiring the highest intellectual behaviour and physical performance."

The panel resumes public hearings Wednesday on the 48-year-old Wyoming congressman's nomination after an early morning, closed session to review Cheney's personal background and health record.

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Cheney has suffered three heart attacks and underwent coronary bypass surgery last year.

McFarlane gave the testimony during North's trial in response to questions from a defence lawyer last afternoon after a morning session in which McFarlane exploded in anger at prosecutor John Keker.

The outburst came amid questioning about a letter sent one day before McFarlane, distressed over the unravelling of the Iran-Con-

tra affair, attempted suicide.

In the Feb. 8, 1987, letter to then-House intelligence committee chairman Lee Hamilton, McFarlane said a foreign national had paid \$5 million to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels. Keker said McFarlane knew the money was coming from a Mideast government, not an individual, and that the government had given \$32 million, not \$5 million.

"Well, Mr Keker, if I had sat down in my state of mind the day before I tried to take my life, if I had tried to parse every last dime that went to the Contras... it probably would have

come out differently," McFarlane retorted.

McFarlane agreed under cross-examination by North lawyer Brendan Sullivan that North wrote only two paragraphs of a Sept. 5, 1985, letter to Hamilton for which North is accused of making false statements to Congress.

McFarlane also testified that he didn't know whether North prepared a draft that became the final version of a Sept. 12, 1985, letter to then-US Rep. Michael Barnes. North also is accused of making false statements to Congress in the response to Barnes.

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Mahdi approves peace pact with rebels

KHARTOUM, March 15. (UPI): Sudanese Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi has agreed to peace with Southern rebels based on an accord freezing the imposition of Islamic sharia laws, a top aide said in remarks published today.

Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Mubarak Al Fadel Al Mahdi told the independent Al Usbu daily that the prime minister had sent his written approval of the pact to rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The key to the accord is a ceasefire, an end to a four-year-long state of emergency and a freeze on the planned introduction of Islamic laws.

The militant National Islamic Front (NIF), which has rejected appeals to join a broad-based government and has bitterly opposed the pact, is committed to sharia.

The minister said he proposed during talks with rebel leaders in Addis Ababa last week the formation of a joint committee to oversee a month's ceasefire from April 1 which would allow relief agencies to ferry supplies to famine-stricken south Sudan.

Tranquility

The United Nations said last week that it wanted a month of tranquility in the South, where the SPLA has been fighting since 1983 to end what it regards as the domination of the Muslim, Arabised North.

More than 250,000 people starved to death there last year and the United Nations fears that, unless relief supplies are not in place before rainy season starts in May, 100,000 more could die this year.

Diplomats in Khartoum said the SPLA was likely to resist a blanket truce but might allow "peace corridors" to be formed.

These would allow relief supplies to be sent in but would prevent the Army restocking and rearming besieged garrison towns.

Arabs cross Egypt, attack Gaza post

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 15. (AP): Two Arab guerrillas crossed the Egyptian border and attacked an Israeli outpost in the occupied Gaza Strip with a rifle and hand grenades, the Army said. The guerrillas were captured and wounded.

The attack occurred on the same day as Israel withdrew from the Red Sea resort of Taba and handed sovereignty to Egypt.

An Army announcement said the guerrillas, aged 15 and 17, were from the Canada Palestinian refugee camp on the Egyptian side of the border.

Military sources said the guerrillas belonged to a fundamentalist group known as Jihad Islami.

No Israeli soldiers were hurt. Sources who demanded anonymity said a third person, perhaps acting as a scout, slipped back across the border with Egypt and avoided capture.

Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, head of Israel's southern command, claimed that even though the guerrillas belonged to Jihad Islami, the attack was carried out with the knowledge of PLO chairman Yasser Arafat and his Fatah guerrillas.

"According to our knowledge, the ring was prepared and trained in the Canada refugee camp in Egyptian Rafah and from there they went with a scout to our territory," he said.

"According to the terrorists being questioned, the ring acted and was sent by Jihad Islami. They went with the knowledge of Fatah, and with the knowledge of Abu Ammar (Arafat's code name)."

Israel Radio said the goal of the guerrillas was to kill soldiers, take hostages and return to Egypt. The guerrillas were promised \$20,000 for making the attack, it claimed.

Mordechai praised the Egyptians for acting immediately to help find the route the guerrillas had taken and mounting a search for the collaborators who helped the infiltrators.

The Army said the guerrillas, who were lightly to moderately wounded, carried Soviet-made automatic AK-47 rifles, a Swedish-made Kurs Gustav submachine gun, nine magazines and six Soviet F1 hand grenades.

A military source said the attack failed when a grenade hurled at an Israeli camp rolled back onto the guerrillas' position and exploded, injuring the two Arabs. Soldiers opened fire after hearing an explosion.

US must accept Palestinian rights

W. Bank professor welcomes dialogue

"we, however, consider the move insufficient."

The Palestinian professor says that opening the dialogue is "a modest move and a minimum requirement" to accept the political role of the US as an accepted mediator.

"But if the US wished to deserveably enjoy this role it should compound the dialogue with an official recognition of the PLO as a legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people," Abu Amr asserts.

More specifically, the US should publicly and unequivocally recognise Palestinian national rights, including "the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state," said Abu Amr, a professor at Bir Zeit University in the occupied West Bank who is currently on a speaking tour to Washington.

Speaking to KUNA, Abu Amr said although the Palestinians have government's decision to open and maintain the official dialogue with PLO,

about US intentions."

He added that among other things, "the attitudes of the US in international forums and at the UN is a test of its seriousness in responding to Palestinian national aspirations."

"The uprising enabled the PLO to meet US conditions without threatening the actual survival of the organisation," Abu Amr says.

The Palestinian academic, like other West Bank thinkers and analysts, is strongly convinced that the intifada was responsible for all the recent developments in the region. "The intifada acted like a catalyst which activated the stagnant political situation in the whole area," he told KUNA.

"The Palestinians today would like to see the uprising continue both as a catalyst and, at the same time, as a mechanism to end the Israeli occupation," the Bir Zeit professor emphasised.

Despite the heavy toll the uprising is taking on the Palestinians under occupation, "they see it as a personal as well as a collective investment. Every Palestinian has paid a price. No one would want to see his or her son wasted without the cherished salvation, the end to Israeli occupation."

Abu Amr asserts that "the need to continue the uprising enjoys Palestinian consensus as a mechanism for a political settlement."

But he also insists that the uprising "is not an end in itself". Under certain circumstances, the Palestinians waging the intifada would be willing to consider putting an end to the uprising.

"If they have sufficient evidence that their demands are going to be met or if some of them are actually met, the Palestinians will voluntarily stop the uprising, even if that was short of an end to the Israeli occupation," Abu Amr concluded.

WASHINGTON, March 15. (KUNA): A Palestinian West Bank leader and academic, Dr Ziad Abu Amr, said the Palestinians strongly believe that the opening of a dialogue with the United States, much as it is welcomed, must be matched by American recognition of Palestinian national rights, a top aide said in remarks published today.

Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Mubarak Al Fadel Al Mahdi told the independent Al Usbu daily that the prime minister had sent his written approval of the pact to rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The key to the accord is a ceasefire, an end to a four-year-long state of emergency and a freeze on the planned introduction of Islamic laws.

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The minister said he proposed during talks with rebel leaders in Addis Ababa last week the formation of a joint committee to oversee a month's ceasefire from April 1 which would allow relief agencies to ferry supplies to famine-stricken south Sudan.

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These would allow relief supplies to be sent in but would prevent the Army restocking and rearming besieged garrison towns.



Beirut victim

A woman cries over the body of her dead neighbour in East Beirut after exchanges of artillery shells between mainly Christian Army troops and Muslim forces which killed 32 people and wounded over one hundred. (Reuter wirephoto)

Seven years of squabbling ends

Israel hands Taba to Egypt

TABA, Egypt, March 15. (AP): Egyptians today raised a huge black, white and red flag over the long-disputed Red Sea resort of Taba and chanted "Allahu Akbar" (God is Great) as an Israeli convoy pulled out.

The turnover ended seven years of bitter squabbling over the 250-acre (100 hectare) strip of beach that deviled relations between the two former Middle East adversaries.

Egyptian troops carrying rifles and 32 Egyptian police entered the resort in groups of three. Hundreds of Egyptian workers climbed a hill overlooking the resort and sang their national anthem, "My Country, My Country."

At the same time, a convoy of dozens of Israeli buses, police vehicles and cars drove out of Taba along with about 50 protesting hotel workers who sang Israel's national anthem. Two Israeli dabbir patrol boats stood off the beach.

A contingent of green-bereted Israeli border police stopped to shake hands with Egyptian police before departing.

A large Israeli flag was defiantly waved from the top floor window of the 10-story hotel, apparently as the Egyptians raised

their flag. Israeli workers at Taba's 336-room Sonesta Hotel chanted in protest shortly before the hand-over and burned tires on a hill overlooking the hotel, sending up a large column of black smoke.

"We want our rights. The government is prepared to give back the land, but they can't give us up," an Israeli woman shouted at police who arrested several workers earlier.

Israel radio broadcast live from the scene. "From this moment, Taba is Egyptian," the Israeli announcer said dramatically as the turnover was completed at noon (1000 GMT).

Yitzhak Lior, deputy director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the senior Israeli present, said "we went to court, and this was the decision. At the bottom line, we arrived at a mutual compromise without scars."

Ahmed Al Masri, Egypt's counsel-general in Eilat, was quoted by Israel's radio as saying the path to improved normalisation of relations with Israel was "now open."

"I hope this will be a bridge to peace, peace between the two peoples," he was quoted as saying.

Weizman raps Shamir over PLO refusal

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 15. (AP): Science Minister Ezer Weizman on Tuesday attacked the government's refusal to talk to the PLO and accused Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of conducting "political acrobatics" to avoid a peace dialogue.

Weizman, a leading member of the left-leaning Labour Party, said his party should leave the government and formulate its own peace proposals if Shamir fails to deliver Israel to the negotiating table by this summer.

"Let's say if by June, July, August, nothing happens ... I think the Labour Party has to crystallise its policy and get the hell out of the government," said Weizman.

Weizman, who was the Labour Party's campaign manager in last November's parliament elections, told reporters in his Jerusalem office that it was unrealistic to expect Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to negotiate with Israel.

Mordechai praised the Egyptians for acting immediately to help find the route the guerrillas had taken and mounting a search for the collaborators who helped the infiltrators.

The Army said the guerrillas, who were lightly to moderately wounded, carried Soviet-made automatic AK-47 rifles, a Swedish-made Kurs Gustav submachine gun, nine magazines and six Soviet F1 hand grenades.

A military source said the attack failed when a grenade hurled at an Israeli camp rolled back onto the guerrillas' position and exploded, injuring the two Arabs. Soldiers opened fire after hearing an explosion.

Jews establish new settlement

Response to Taba

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 15. (AP): Jewish settlers moved tractors and mobile homes to a hilltop today, starting a new settlement in the occupied West Bank.

The settlement, the first since the new coalition government came to office last November, started the same day as Israel withdrew from the Red Sea resort of Taba, handing sovereignty over to Egypt.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, the Army arrested Palestinians suspected of killing two Palestinian hospital workers who cooperated with Israel, an Army spokesman said. He identified the leader of the hit squad as a member of Fatah, the mainstream PLO faction.

During house searches, troops confiscated a submachine gun, seven handguns and a typewriter used to write threatening letters to collaborators, the spokesman said.

Israeli officials have said attacks by Palestinians against so-called collaborators are in violation of Arafat's pledge that the PLO has abandoned terror.

The hijacking "a very serious crime" and said, "It's fair to say we will ask for a life sentence."

Yunis, who was arrested in 1987 in an FBI "sting" operation on the Mediterranean Sea, was convicted of hostage-taking, conspiracy and air piracy, and faces a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

The jury, during 14 hours of deliberations spanning three days, rejected Yunis' contention

that he was acting under orders from his superiors in the Amal militia by seizing the plane to publicize demands that Lebanon be rid of Palestinians.

But the panel of seven women and five men found the soft-spoken, bearded defendant innocent of three other counts alleging he played a role in the beatings of sky marshals on the plane and in blowing up the aircraft. No one was killed.

Yunis, 30, was the first man

Kabul mounts attacks in Jalalabad

SAMARKHEL, Afghanistan, March 15. (UPI): Government forces mounted air and artillery attacks against Muslim rebels trying to take the key eastern city of Jalalabad, while the Afghan envoy to Moscow claimed two US military advisers died in combat.

US officials flatly denied the charge yesterday by Afghan Ambassador Sayed Ghulazai,

and a State Department spokesman said the envoy may have been referring to two American journalists believed to have been

"caught in cross fire" in the Jalalabad area, no further details were available.

Ghulazai told a Moscow news conference the two Americans were among a group of foreign military advisers and Pakistani troops assisting the Muslim rebels on Monday in an unsuccessful attack on Jalalabad, which sits astride the main road used to truck food and other supplies to Kabul from Pakistan.

He said the bodies of two American advisers and 30 Pakistani soldiers were found around Jalalabad.

He said the bodies of the foreigners were taken by helicopter back to Pakistan on Monday.

Rebels

Rebel leaders said they hoped to capture Jalalabad and make it the seat of an interim government formed by their Pakistani-based leaders last month to replace President Najibullah. The Soviet Union Feb 15 completed a nine-month withdrawal of its troops backing the government of Najibullah.

Government troops and US-supported rebels face each other from either side of Jalalabad's airport, a heavily mined no-man's land. The city itself is under guerrilla pressure from all four sides.

"We are so close now we can hear officials in loudspeaker vans appealing to civilians to defend the city," said one guerrilla commander, Haji Mateen.

Afghan warplanes, flying in pairs and at high altitude, bombed rebel areas around Jalalabad and in Samarkhel, 8 miles (13 km) south of the city, during a visit by a group of Pakistani journalists yesterday. Both sides also exchanged artillery fire.

The guerrillas said they suffered considerable casualties in yesterday's bombardment, but claimed they shot down two jet fighters.

The vast Samarkhel garrison, designed to defend Jalalabad, fell last week after about three hours of fighting. It is now manned by about 500 mujahedin guerrillas and serves as a base for the operation against Jalalabad.

Hasty

Items of clothing, shoes, letters and photographs left behind by soldiers here witness to the hasty government retreat.

Guerrilla commanders said they had captured about 300 military vehicles as well as artillery and other weapons at the garrison.

India is ready to fly humanitarian aid to Afghanistan soon, Afghan Foreign Minister Abdol Wakil said today.

On his arrival in Kabul after a two-week visit to India, Wakil was asked by reporters if New Delhi had agreed to send food and other supplies.

This and other ideas explicitly excluded the PLO from any role.

Israeli-PLO talks needed

(Continued from Page 1)

But Jordan's King Hussein has ruled himself out as a negotiating partner for the Palestinians, in favour of the PLO.

A leading member of the PLO said today the US must define terrorism and clearly spell out its position on Middle East issues in its next talks with the PLO.

Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), deputy leader of PLO chairman Arafat's Fatah movement, said there was an urgency about the talks because extremists were waiting to sabotage the PLO's peace strategy.

The meeting, which is expected in the next two weeks, will be the second formal session since the US agreed to open a dialogue with the PLO last December.

The PLO has accused the US administration of dragging its feet on Middle East policy and of bringing up minor issues in a series of informal contacts between US Ambassador in Tunis Robert Pelletreau and PLO representative Hakam Balawi.

"The next talks should go into the fundamental issues, most importantly the US attitude towards a comprehensive settlement ... towards the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and its position on an international peace conference," Abu Iyad said.

"Then we must define terrorism, so we no longer disagree on this, since we consider that the intifada and the armed struggle against the



Education delegates

HH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah yesterday received at his Diwan at the Bayan Palace, heads of delegations who took part in the recently concluded 19th Educational Conference. HH welcomed the delegates and thanked them for participating in the conference.

NHA to distribute 4,000 houses

By Nashat Al Agha

KUWAIT'S National Housing Authority (NHA) will soon begin a distribution of houses to citizens which is expected to total 4,000 by the end of this year, according to a senior official.

In an interview with Arab Times Seyassah Fareed Al Ajed, Assistant Director-General for Distribution, Ratification and Follow-Up Affairs at the authority, said that this record figure will constitute a paragon leap in the authority's efforts towards providing government housing to its citizens.

Suggestions

He added that every effort is being made to ensure appropriate standards of design and execution. To obtain optimum levels in this respect, the authority has taken into account the comments and suggestions of citizens who replied to the questionnaire circulated by the NHA, including their own personal past experiences.

Ajed said that all plots falling with the current five-year plan—which is to expire next year—will be distributed. He added that 630 plots are to be distributed in the Al Qurain project, and 328 plots at Sabah Al Salem suburb.

Unexpected dust storm

A SUDDEN change in the direction of winds yesterday afternoon, brought a massive dust storm to Kuwait which took everyone by surprise and forced Kuwait International Airport to close. The weather department said that strong north-westerly winds blowing from Iraq caused a low pressure belt. Kuwait International Airport received the last flight at 3.15 pm shortly before the dust storm erupted. An Egypt Air flight was later diverted to Bahrain. Other incoming flights were asked to delay their arrival. The closure continued for a few hours only as the dust later subsided. A cold spell followed.

Drugs seized

By Salem Al Wawan

A LARGE quantity of drugs was seized recently by custom officials at Kuwait International Airport from a passenger who arrived from Pakistan. It has been learned.

The Pakistani national, identified as Ahmad, arrived from Karachi aboard a Kuwait Airways flight. Alert customs officials suspicious of the man's behaviour instituted a thorough search of his personal baggage and discovered the drugs neatly hidden in a large bag.

The accused and the contraband have been referred to investigation authorities.

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Kuwait

Arab family and society link vital

Women's conference in Bahrain

By Fathima Ahmed
Arab Times staff

A GROUP of Kuwaiti women will stress the vital link between the family and Arab society at a meeting of the Women's Co-ordinating Committee for the Gulf and Arabian peninsula to be held in Bahrain from March 18 to 22.

"We don't want the family to break up. The nuclear family has been a part of traditional Arab

society and we will strive to maintain it," said Dr Rasha Al Sabah, who chairs the two-woman official Kuwaiti delegation.

Dr Rasha, who is Assistant Rector for Community Services at Kuwait University, said: "We cannot lose our roots; because if we do, we'll become non-perso-

Family ties

She said that although modernisation has brought about progress and change, the Arabs

are not willing to give up their deep-rooted tradition of close family ties. "We do not call for progress at the expense of losing our identity," she said.

Dr Loulwa Al Qatami, who is the secretary-general of the Women's Co-ordinating Committee, has already left for Bahrain to prepare for the opening.

In addition to Dr Loulwa and Dr Rasha, a 26-woman unofficial delegation will also par-

ticipate in the Bahrain meeting. Among them are Alia Al Essa of the Nadi Al Fatal, and Dalal Al Othman.

Theme

Participants will discuss 12 studies on family and children. Kuwait will present two papers on "The Gulf Family and Hopes for a Better Future for its Children", which is the theme of the conference. Dr Latifa Al Rujab, an assistant at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and

Dr Ali Al Tarrah, a leading sociologist, will present the papers.

Representatives from the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs in the six GCC states, Iraq and North and South Yemen will participate in the conference.

Dr Rasha said the participants will discuss financial and cultural reports and elect a new committee. The meeting is held every two years.

AIDS carriers will not be deported

By Jelena Porter
Arab Times staff

KUWAIT is no longer indiscriminately deporting expatriate AIDS carriers, according to Dr Kazim Behbehani, the co-ordinator of Kuwait's committee for control of AIDS.

Each case is reviewed individually, and those who do not pose a danger to the community and who can be closely monitored are allowed to stay in the country, Behbehani told the Arab Times.

He cited children as an example.

Twenty-five AIDS carriers, including five Kuwaitis, have been identified in Kuwait. The number of expatriate carriers who have been deported has not been disclosed.

The policy of deporting expatriates infected with AIDS first came under review last October at the inaugural meeting of the new 15-member AIDS committee. The decision to modify the policy is believed to have been taken late last year.

Meanwhile, the authorities are preparing to launch a health education campaign which will tell the public how AIDS cannot be contracted. This, it is hoped, will help dispel a widespread misconception in Kuwait that the killer disease can be transmitted through incidental contact with AIDS carriers.

The campaign is primarily aimed at Kuwait's youth.

Misconceptions

"The students appear to know how the disease is transmitted, but there are misconceptions and doubts as to whether it can be transmitted through a handshake, kissing, clothes, use of public lavatories, saliva and in swimming pools," said Dr Imitai Al Nashar, head of Kuwait's school health education unit. From her interviews with dozens of school students she concluded that such misconceptions would lead to the condemnation of the AIDS carriers as outcasts, something the health authorities would like to avoid.

Nashar spoke at the end of a five-day workshop in Kuwait aimed at hammering out a health education campaign against AIDS. This was the first attempt in Kuwait to devise an anti-AIDS campaign based on interviews with the members of the public.

Workshop

Sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the workshop brought together experts

from the organisation's headquarters in Geneva, the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) in Alexandria, and the region's 12 Arab countries. These included physicians, health educators, artists, TV producers and social scientists.

The workshop produced some thirty public information messages aimed at 10 target groups, including teachers, nurses, policemen, students, hotel employees, religious groups and mothers.

The messages, to be displayed on posters and in pamphlets and film presentations, will try to fill each particular group's gaps in information on the disease.

Message

Perhaps the most important message that emerged from the workshop — one which applies to all groups — is that protection from the disease is first an individual responsibility.

"We told the students that if they don't protect themselves nobody else can," said Nashar.

She was disheartened to learn from her interviews with the students that most have a poor relationship with their fathers. "The father is not their source of information, comfort or trust," said Nashar.

Although the participants claimed that the messages did not contain do's and don'ts per se, the workshop produced some specific instructions.

Among the messages was one directed to men, who are more exposed to the disease. It says: Have one partner, and she should be your wife.

Another message appealed to the Arabs' love of children.

It asks newly married people to abstain from practices that can lead to an AIDS infection and thus harm their future offspring.

A different set of messages were devised for laboratory technicians warning them to strictly adhere to the lab procedures when handling blood samples, irrespective of whether they are infected or not.

Dr Hind Khattab of EMRO praised the stand of the religious groups who instead of outrage were ready to show sympathy for AIDS patients.

"They stressed that an AIDS patient in their view is the same as any other sick person. They pledged to co-operate with the health authorities in spreading their messages," said Khattab.

Protection for local industry

New committee to develop state plan

KUWAIT is planning to set up a ministerial committee headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed to supervise the development and application of the state plan, according to a senior official.

Undersecretary of Planning and the General Co-ordinator of the Five-Year-Plan Dr Abdul Hadi Al Awadhi said that the committee is to be set up due to the absence of a planning council. The ministry is compiling comprehensive data on the activities of industrial installations.

Overview

A study prepared by the Ministry of Planning stressed the need for organising planning units within both ministries and public establishments to co-operate in preparing plans and detailed programmes, the official said.

The new planning concept is intended to provide an all-inclusive overview of economic and social relations, including solutions to present development problems, Awadhi said.

The workings of the Public Authority for Industrialisation had been discussed with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Shuaibah Industrial Area. The Ministry of Planning will play a significant role towards setting up of the authority's objectives. The establishment of this authority is intended to alleviate several problems that face the industrialisation in the country.

Speaking of the national workforce and its present role in the industrial field, the undersecretary said that although Law No. 6 of 1965 stipulates that the national workforce should constitute at least 25 per cent at industrial installations, this has been ignored by employers des-

pite direct and indirect support extended by the government. Local industrialists have exerted no efforts towards grooming national manpower. Expatriates still constitute 92 per cent of the workforce in the private sector, the official said.

Manpower

He added that the present plan envisages meeting the requirements of social development and manpower needs. Bringing about a balance between the Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti population is a top priority, the official said.

Commenting on the performance of national industries, Awadhi said the government is striving to provide protection to these industries through raising customs levies on imported products. But, he added, national industries should upgrade the quality of their products and develop strong marketing policies.

BAHRAIN DIGEST

Oil show a success

THE Society of Petroleum Engineers 6th Middle East Oil Show, which ended Tuesday, proved to be an outstanding success, according to the organisers at Arabian Exhibitions Management (AEM).

The event, which lasted three-and-a-half days, recorded a total of 3,485 visitors, out of which 1,925 were foreign visitors or 55 per cent of the total. The number of foreign visitors to the show is a record, which also represents the largest foreign visitor attendance for any exhibition held in Bahrain, according to a statement issued to the Arab Times.

The prestigious biennial show generated a constant stream of top quality visitors from the region's oil industry. Participants have been reported to be generally jubilant at the level of business contacts made. Actual confirmed sales were made from some stands, including a British company that sold its entire display stocks on the spot to a Saudi buyer.

Attendance

A total of 825 delegates registered for the technical conference, making this the largest number ever to attend in the 10 years that this conference has been held in Bahrain, according to the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE). A total of 90 conference papers were presented during the sessions which were exceptionally well-attended.

A spokeswoman for the SPE commented that in 1979, when the conference first took place over 90 per cent of the authors and speakers came from outside the Middle East region, compared to the 1989 conference where over 70 per cent of the authors and speakers came from within the Middle East.

Bahrain population goes up

ACCORDING to the Central Statistics Bureau, the population of the Bahrain is now 457,600, of whom two-thirds are nationals and one-third expatriates, the official Gulf News Agency reported today.

The figures reflected an overall population increased of around 10 per cent over the past two years. The same bureau estimated the population of Bahrain in March 1987 at 411,660.

The report in round figures broke down the present total of 302,500 Bahrainis as 152,000 males and 150,700 females, and the 154,800 expatriates as 114,000 males and 40,800 females, the agency said.

Oil boom

The report said there were 157,000 residents under 14, compared to 290,500 aged between 15 and 64, and 10,100 who are over 65.

The expatriate community in Bahrain came with the oil boom years of the 1970s as in the rest of the Gulf Indians and Pakistanis form the bulk of the labour force.

Bahrain derives its importance mainly from being an offshore banking centre in the heart of the oil-rich region and there is also a large British community.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

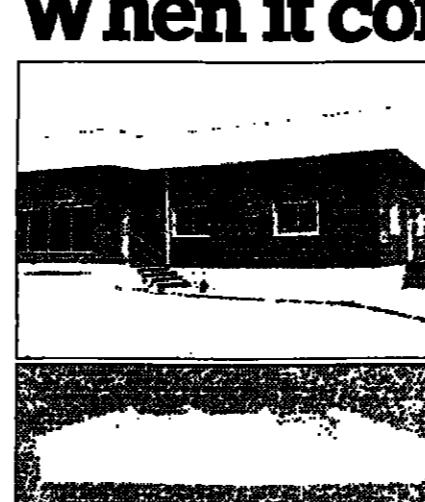
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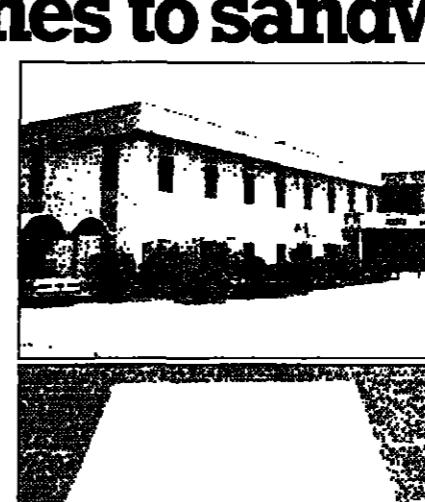
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Dependence on external sources will threaten political stability

DAMMAM, March 15. (GNA): A recent economic study warned that the food situation in the Arab world is deteriorating. The study predicted that if the present situation continues, the dangers threatening the Arab world will increase. It further warned that food could be used as a weapon to pressure, threaten and destabilise the Arab economic and political situation.

The study was recently prepared and issued by the Arab Union of Chambers (Trade, Industry and Agriculture). The study said that the main problem arises from the fact that the Arab world continues to increase its dependence upon external sources for its food requirements, with the result that their deficit increases each year.

Dependence

The study said that as long as Arab food production weakens, Arab dependence on foreign sources will increase with local Arab markets becoming flooded with foreign products which subsequently weaken local production. This, the study emphasised, further complicates Arab problems.

The study said that several Arab countries have been trapped by number of foreign countries who provide them with food products at cheap prices. Thus, the study continued, since Arab countries try to provide food products to their people at the lowest possible prices, this causes them to neglect

national food production. The study named the sectors of meat and dairies as being most affected by such policies.

The study added that what adds insult to injury is that the Arab food imports bill has increased ten times in the last 15 years. The study questioned what the size of this bill will be if prices continue to increase.

In the period 1970-1985, the study said, the annual growth rate of Arab agricultural production was only 2.5 per cent while the annual growth of the Arab demand for such products was six per cent.

Accordingly, self-sufficiency rates of Arab agricultural production during the same period sharply dropped.

The study also said that the only food sector with surplus in the Arab world is fish products, which exceed requirements.

The study added that with the exception of few cases such as Saudi Arabia's wheat production and Morocco, Jordan and Libya's vegetable production, all other Arab countries have achieved very low growth rates in all food sectors. It added that the annual growth rate of agricultural production in the Arab world during the period from 1975-85 was about four per cent, while at the same time the annual increase rate in the value of food imports was around 16 per cent.

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

VICTORY belongs to the most persevering — Napoleon Bonaparte. French general-statesman (1769-1821).

Spirit of entente

Overhauling Aswan Dam

By Jeffrey Bartholet

ASWAN, Egypt, (Reuters): US engineers are overhauling the Aswan High Dam, 33 years after Washington refused to finance it and left Moscow to build what became a symbol of Egyptian-Soviet defiance of the West.

The Americans are replacing some of the machinery in the dam with modern parts made in the United States.

US ambassador Frank Wisner said on a recent visit to this Nile-side town 1,200 km (740 miles) south of Cairo: "This dam is an historic accomplishment of Egypt in her partnership with the Soviet Union — nothing should begin to take away from that."

But he said that the US renovations should be seen in the spirit of detente.

High Dam manager Hamdi Shafei remembers his anger in 1956, when Washington backed out of the Aswan project hoping to pressure Egypt's revolutionary leader Gamal Abdel Nasser into more pro-Western policies.

"There was a very bad feeling. I think the Americans are now sorry for that decision," he said.

Nasser nationalised the British-controlled Suez Canal, in part to use its profits for the dam project, and proclaimed before an Egyptian crowd at the time: "Oh Americans, may you choke to death on your fury."

The step was a turning point in the superpower struggle for dominance in the Middle East. The Soviet Union took over the Aswan project and became Egypt's backer for more than a decade.

The tide turned again until 1972, when late President Anwar Sadat expelled Soviet advisers and began courting the West.

The United States is now pumping \$140 million into projects to upgrade the dam, a massive concrete and earthen structure built by 35,000 engineers and workers over a decade.

Renovations include replacement of the 12 hydroturbine runners, which spin out 15 per cent of Egypt's electricity.

Half the new 140-tonne runners, three to four per cent more efficient than the old ones, have been installed and the others should be in place by 1992. They are designed to extend the life of the power station by 40 years.

The dam is believed to have spared Egypt the effects of both drought and flood that have ravaged other countries along the Nile basin.

The current modernisation is funded from \$2.3 billion in annual US aid to Egypt, the second largest recipient of American assistance after Israel.

Moscow, meanwhile, is cautiously moving back on the scene. In 1987, the Soviet Union rescheduled Egypt's \$3 billion in military debt on easy terms and they are now starting to discuss soft loans for new civilian projects.

But co-operation — not competition — is the theme of superpower foreign policy today.

"In the 1950s and 1970s, each side had a gun at its back," Egyptian Electricity Minister Maher Abaza told Reuters.

"The Americans said you are my friend or you are my enemy — this was their policy then and it was the same for the Russians."

"But nowadays they say 'you are my friend and you can also be a friend to others'."

Wisner's visit to the dam, including a minute to admire a large bust of Nasser, came two months after Abaza took a Soviet government delegation there and praised co-operation with Moscow.

Egypt has found that it does not jeopardise its relations with the West by slowly improving ties with the Soviet Union. The balance — though still strongly tilted toward Washington — helps President Hosni Mubarak resist local and foreign critics who call him a US puppet.

"All nations need to extend a hand," said Wisner at the High Dam.

"It would be wrong to think our visit or anybody's visit is competition."

Egypt, \$43 billion in debt and anxious for help from any source, is careful not to offend either side.

"Of course we are Arabs and Arabs trace everything to their origins," said Shafei, the dam manager. "If the Russians helped us construct this dam, then we keep the Russians in our hearts."

Press review

Lebanese urged to unite

AMMAN, (Reuters): A Jordanian newspaper has urged Lebanese to unite to end their country's political strife and expressed sorrow over the renewed cycle of fighting and bloodshed.

"Unity is the only way to rescue Lebanon... Dialogue and national reconciliation are the only means to end the country's crisis," said the Arabic daily Al Dustour.

It accused "some Lebanese factions whose interests were harmed" by Arab League efforts to help pull the country out of its political dilemma for Tuesday's fighting in which some 50 people were killed and 140 wounded.

"It seems that some factions speeded up efforts to explode Arab goodwill efforts by using force for fear they might lose their partial interests that do not serve the country's welfare."

Start serious talks

CAIRO, (KUNA): An Egyptian daily has called on the United States to promote the American-Palestinian dialogue and to start serious talks with the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of Palestinian people.

The daily Al Akhbar said yesterday that if Washington was sincere in its efforts for realising peace instead of violence in the occupied lands it should hasten the holding of talks with Palestinians and support the convening of the international peace conference in the nearest future.

The daily also expressed its concern over the new tone of some of Washington officials who directly and indirectly are calling for an end to Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab lands.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1521 — Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan reaches Philippines islands.

1527 — Mogul Emperor Babar defeats Hindu confederacy at Kanwanha, India.

1534 — England severs all relations with Roman Catholic papacy.

1690 — France's King Louis XIV sends troops to Ireland to fight for King James II.

1812 — Austria in alliance with France, agrees to provide Army for Napoleon Bonaparte.

1844 — Greece adopts constitution with two chambers.

1851 — Spanish concordat with papacy, whereby Catholicism becomes sole faith in Spain and church gains control of education and the press.

1906 — Japan nationalizes its railways.

1917 — Russia's Tsar Nicholas II abdicates and Prince George Lvov, Paul Milikov and Alexander Kerensky form ministry.

1922 — Britain recognizes kingdom of Egypt under Fuad I, with joint Anglo-Egyptian sovereignty over Sudan.

1934 — Rome protocols signed between Italy, Austria and Hungary to form Danubian bloc against little entente of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia.

1935 — Germany repudiates disarmament clauses of Versailles treaty that ended World War I.

1945 — Japanese resistance to US assault on Iwo Jima in Pacific comes to end in World War II.

1987 — Torrential rains and mudslides in Tadzhikistan, Soviet Union, destroy dam, killing 19 people and leaving 9 others missing.

Syria unlikely to leave

Lebanon in turmoil

By Diana Abdallah

BEIRUT, (Reuters): Syria, which began its military involvement in Lebanon fighting for the Christians 13 years ago, has been formally told by Christian leader Michel Aoun to get out.

But diplomats and politicians say Damascus is highly unlikely to heed Major-General Aoun's demand that it end "the worst occupation in history," by withdrawing its 25,000 troops.

Syria sees the chaos in Lebanon, divided into militia-run fiefdoms and partly occupied by Israel, as a threat to its own local and regional security, they said.

"Syria will not withdraw its troops from Lebanon until it sees that the risk to its security is over. At least until Israel withdraws," one diplomat said.

Analysts say Damascus wants to tighten its hold on its tiny neighbour to reinforce its role as a Middle East power.

"Syria will never give up Lebanon even if it has to fight for it. It is the last card it has for any regional settlement," an Arab analyst said.

Syria now supports the Muslim-led government of acting Prime Minister Selim Al Hoss, competing for recognition with Aoun's administration since abortive presidential polls last September.

Iraq's logistical and diplomatic support for Aoun, who is also the Christian army commander, is the latest challenge to the role of Baghdad's arch-enemy Syria.

Pro-Syrian political sources say Iraq supported Aoun in his demand on Tuesday that Damascus immediately withdraw its forces, deployed over two-thirds of Lebanon.

Aoun accused Syria of taking part in fierce battles between his troops and Muslim forces across Beirut's Green Line, in nearby mountains and in the eastern Bekaa on Tuesday.

The battles, which killed at least 50 people, were the bloodiest between Muslims and Christians in two years.

There was no independent confirmation of his charges. Syria's policy so far had been to avoid direct military intervention, preferring to influence events through its Muslim allies.

Diplomats and analysts feared Aoun's determination to continue the battle against Syria would plunge the country into a new bloodbath and possibly spark a regional conflict.

Syria is trying to avoid being dragged into a confrontation with the Christians because it knows Aoun wants to give regional and international dimensions to the conflict, a pro-Syrian politician said.

Syrian troops entered Lebanon in 1976 at the government's request, ostensibly as part of an Arab peacekeeping force to halt the civil war which began in 1975.



A young boy runs during the latest fighting in West Beirut. (Reuters wirephoto)

Harmony disturbed

SIR: Salman Rushdie in his novel *The Satanic Verses* has written against the Holy Quran and Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

Every time a Muslim names the prophets' of God, Adam, Abraham, Ismail, Jacob, Isaac, Moses and Jesus he/she adds the suffix of Alaihi Salam.

A Muslim respects Moses, Jesus and others not a shade less than do Christians, Jews or others. Through these prophets, the holy books and scriptures were revealed and we hold them in the highest esteem. All prophets are our prophets. We make no distinction between one and another among them (Holy Quran, S III, 84). There is perfect harmony between the prophets and the holy verses which were revealed to them. The interpretive differences should not be more lasting than the ripple marks on the sand dunes.

I have never entered a church, a synagogue, a temple or any other place of worship with shoes on, just as I cannot enter a mosque in a similar way. This is in compliance with the mandatory norms of Islamic tradition framed in the Quranic verses and sayings of Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet's sayings lay down elaborate code of conduct for the conservation of resources, consumption, production, distribution and exchange. They give spiritual solace to believers.

Unfortunately the stand taken by Salman Rushdie is an attempt to bring the world community closer to hatred, withering harmony and, God forbid, war of nations. If Rushdie and others are pleased to hurt the feelings of millions of people and to provoke deaths and demonstrations, it is a blow to intellectualism, internationalism and human rights.

The *Satanic Verses* counters UN's successful efforts of bringing social, economic and political harmony to the world. I solicit the cooperation of the United Nations and the secretary-general in settling such controversial matters to further strengthen world harmony and peace.

Dr Salahuddin, Alligarh, India.

defence of Islam and the Prophet of Islam as our forefathers fought for almost 400 years in defence of Islam, the only true religion before God.

Jamil D. Yahya Alyamani, The Philippines.

Freedom has its limits

SIR: The controversial novel "The Satanic Verses" by Salman Rushdie should open our eyes to make a strong resolution never to offend the religious sentiments of others. Freedom of speech doesn't mean one can hurt the feelings of others.

Politicians should not meddle with religion to avoid adding fuel to fire. Let history be our teacher.

Yusuf Khan, Shamiya.

Appropriate reply needed

SIR: The recent violence in various parts of the world caused by Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* deserves serious and thorough investigation of the plot against Muslims.

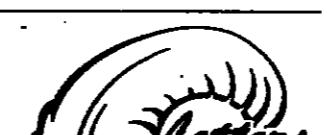
Muslims, all over the world are not prepared to tolerate any defamatory comment about the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

God declares in the Holy Quran that Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is the supreme personality ever born and his deeds were governed by the Almighty. So any absurd and ridiculous comments on such a personality, to get cheap publicity, only hurts the sentiments of billions of Muslims around the world. As Islam stands on a firm base, a small fly like Rushdie should not be given so much publicity.

In the 18th century a book on Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) caused severe resentment among Muslims, but Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the founder of Muslim Aligarh University, in reply to the above book wrote "The Life of Our Holy Prophet" (PBUH).

We now have enough philosophy to give prompt and appropriate reply to Rushdie's novel. The image of our beloved Prophet is beyond the reach of human beings, but we have to clear the doubts from the minds of non-Muslims. If proper and immediate reply is not given then non-Muslims may think Rushdie is a great author. We must prove that Rushdie is nothing but a puppet of some agencies.

M. Hart in his book "The Hundreds" placed Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in the first place and the reasons he gave is: "World has never produced such a great man who himself in his life spread Islam in Arabia, Africa, Europe and Central Asia not by force, but by his excellent behaviour with non-Muslims. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)"



was the most practical man ever born in the world."

Muslims all over the world should condemn Rushdie.

I fully agree and support the recent statements of Ayatollah Khomeini and I wish that I may be the person who could have killed not only Rushdie but every critic of our beloved Holy Prophet.

I strongly condemn the recent comments of Benazir Bhutto on Rushdie's novel. The people of Pakistan have elected her prime minister and they are strong enough to remove her. She must respect the sentiments of the masses.

Syed Mohd Arif, Safat.

Extend deadline

SIR: The expatriates working in Kuwait want to draw the attention of the government to the problems faced by workers while changing residence permit.

As there is little time left we request the authorities to extend the deadline to regularise residence permit.

Mohd Sharif Khan.

ALL letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

Need for new ideas

US, Israel paper over differences

By Carol Giacomo

WASHINGTON, (Reuters): Israel and the Bush administration have papered over differences in their first high-level talks but they could eventually be at odds over Israel's refusal to deal with the PLO.

US analysts said the talks between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker achieved the US goal of clearly signalling that Israel must develop new ideas for reducing tensions in the occupied territories.

But Baker laid the groundwork for a potential diplomatic clash on Tuesday when he told a congressional hearing that Israel might have to negotiate peace with the PLO, something Israeli leaders have said they will never do.

"It is an element of our policy to promote direct negotiations which can be meaningful between Israelis and Palestinians," Baker said.

Talk

But Arens said that neither Baker nor President Bush had urged Israel to talk to the PLO when he met with them on Monday and he reaffirmed Israel's determination to find non-PLO partners in any dialogue.

"We did discuss the importance of reducing tensions in the area... I didn't need to remind the secretary of state that nobody's more intent in achieving that result than we are."

"But I don't think anybody has a prescription about how that is to be done," Arens said.

Strains in the new US-Israeli relationship could become more apparent when Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir visits the United States next month.

The prospect of talks between Israel and the PLO was virtually unmentionable for US officials before Chairman Yasser Arafat last December met American conditions to renounce terrorism and recognise Israel's right to exist.

But now Washington has resumed its own talks with the PLO and a new era has begun, experts say.

During Arens' visit, the United States and Israel stressed similarities rather than differences in their positions but both sides worry a gap could grow as the peace process moves forward. Barry Rubin of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy told Reuters.

The visit to Washington by Arens cleared the way for new Israeli proposals for addressing Palestinian concerns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip "but the real test will be when Prime Minister Shamir comes" next month, said Middle East expert Judith Kipper of the Brookings Institution.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

US trade deficit shrinks to \$9.49b

WASHINGTON, March 15. (AP): The US merchandise trade deficit shrank to \$9.49 billion in January, as the nation posted a rare trade surplus with Western Europe and the imbalance with Japan declined to its lowest point in almost four years, the government reported today.

The Commerce Department said the sharp 13.7 per cent improvement in the overall trade deficit, the best showing since October, reflected a 6.9 per cent drop in imports that was enough to offset a 4.3 per cent decline in US export sales.

The monthly improvement was better than many analysts had been expecting, although they cautioned against reading too much into a one-month swing in the figures.

Deficit

The \$9.49-billion January deficit would translate into an annual imbalance of \$114 billion, compared with a deficit for all of 1988 of \$119.76 billion.

While that would represent a small improvement, many economists are not looking for any change in the nation's trade performance this year.

European oil prices jump to 15-month highs

LONDON, March 15. (Reuters): Oil prices surged to 15-month highs today in Europe after reports that Saudi Arabia, the world's largest exporter, planned further supply cuts.

The prices on the European free or "spot" market, a barometer of supply and demand, were also helped higher by news of lower US oil stocks.

"The API's (American Petroleum Institute stock figures) just boosted an already strong market," one European trader said, referring to the US data issued yesterday.

Brent blend crude from Britain's North Sea, the most widely traded internationally, leapt to around \$17.60 a barrel for May delivery, its highest since December 1987.

Prices

Brent prices fell to two-year lows of \$11 last October before the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed to implement output curbs from the start of this year.

Prices have been supported by these cuts and a promise of reciprocal cuts from exporting nations outside the group.

Already higher crude prices have been reflected in pump prices on garage forecourts. Retailers say petrol prices are likely to rise further with the approach of the Easter "driving season" when European and North American motorists traditionally begin to use their cars more as spring sets in.

Yesterday, news that Norway's Ekofisk oilfield complex had closed temporarily following a small fire sparked off the rally. The field resumed production today, its operator said.

Saudi Arabia told Japanese buyers yesterday it would slash their crude supplies by 30 per cent in April reflecting OPEC's determination to rein in output to 18.5 million barrels daily for the first half of this year, traders said.

Industry sources in Tokyo said today that Saudi Arabia also planned to restrict supplies to the United States and Europe. They declined to detail the extent of the cuts.

Egypt boosts oil prices

CAIRO, March 15. (Reuters): Egypt raised its crude oil prices today for the second time this month due to firm world markets.

Hammam Ayoub, the Oil Ministry's foreign sales director, announced the new increase after a meeting of the government's pricing committee.

The prices for March 16-31 will be \$16.50 a barrel for the top-grade Gulf of Suez blend; \$15.65 a barrel for Belavim; \$14.50 a barrel for Ras Badran; and \$14.20 a barrel for Ras Ghareb.

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EFTA seeks to boost close ties with EEC

Common strategy needed

OSLO, March 15. (Reuters): Leaders of the six-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) called today for closer institutional ties with the European Economic Community, saying they wanted to be part of the EEC's barrier-free internal market.

The leaders from Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Switzerland, Finland and Austria ended a two-day summit in agreement on the need to build a more structured EFTA which could speak with the EEC with one voice.

Partner

"We envisage that negotiations would lead to the fullest possible realisation of free movement of goods, services, capital and persons, with the aims of creating a dynamic and homogeneous European space," the summit communiqué said.

The summit, only the fifth since EFTA was formed nearly 30 years ago, was called to work

out a common strategy as the EEC single market after 1992 approaches.

EFTA is the EEC's major trading partner although in terms of population it is only a tenth the size of the community.

"We are ready to explore various options and ways and means to strengthen the institutional links between the EFTA states and the EEC. We would not exclude any option from the scope of our future dialogue with the EEC," the communiqué said.

Officials close to the talks said the fact that the communiqué had not ruled out any option, including an EEC-EFTA customs union, was significant in the light of stated differences between some EFTA members.

Swiss President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz strongly denied at a news conference that his country had been unwilling to strengthen EFTA because it feared losing national autonomy in education.

The leaders saw EFTA adding its resources to a common research and development effort to make European industry more competitive.

They also suggested pooling resources with the EEC to protect the environment and expanding co-operation in

education.

Delors under fire

Fortress America may be coming: Young

WASHINGTON, March 15. (Reuters): Britain's Secretary of State for Trade and Industry today disputed US charges the European Economic Community would close its borders to imports and said signs for protectionism were more evident in the United States.

"I find more actual evidence of a 'fortress America' than I do of a 'fortress Europe,' the secretary, Lord Young, said in a speech to the National Press Club.

Integration

He said such evidence includes congressional attempts to impose new disclosure requirements on foreign investment and a 1988 trade bill provision requiring the United States to negotiate remedies for persistent bilateral trade imbalances.

On the other hand, Young said, the United States has little

to fear from the planned economic integration of the European Economic Community (EEC), which is scheduled for 1992.

US officials have said the integration could lead to a "fortress Europe" mentality in which severe barriers were erected to imports into the EEC.

"Europe is far more dependent upon exports than the (United States), and we would be the very first to suffer if we acted at all in a protectionist manner," Young said.

For example, he said, the EEC would be unwise to set manufacturing and other standards to exclude non-EEC businesses, as some have feared.

Standards that differed radically from those used elsewhere in the world would cripple EEC manufacturers' ability to export, he said.

The official disclosed that the projects included 60 joint ventures with a total capital investment of \$600 million, 200 million from the United States and 100 million from the European Economic Community.

The head of the French delegation told Al Nabouda that the purpose of the visit was to prepare a comprehensive study to identify the reasons for the absence of French products in

the Dubai market, as well as to establish direct links between French exporters and Dubai importers.

The 16-member French delegation represents companies dealing in foodstuff, fertilizers, agricultural products, chemicals, aircraft, satellites, office furniture, building materials and transport. It also includes French bank executives.

The delegation has invited the Dubai chamber to send one to France.

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WORLD STOCK MARKETS

ARAB TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, MARCH 16-17, 1989

International Bond Highlights

AMSTERDAM: An agreement is near on a much-debated capital increase of between 20 and 25 billion dirs over the next four years for the Inter-American Development Bank, IADB president Enrique Iglesias said. XLF D 1526.

London: Telin Ltd has launched a 300 mln dirs par priced equity warrant bond due March 30, 1993 with an indicated coupon of 4-1/2 pct; lead manager Salomon Europe Ltd said. XLF A 1016.

London: Sumitomo Metal International Finance Nod BV is issuing a 100 mln dirs Eurobond due April 21, 1992 paying a coupon of 10-3/4 pct and priced at 102; lead manager Salomon Brothers International said. XLF L 1122.

London: Oesterreichische Landesbank AG is issuing a 60 billion callable Eurobond due March 23, 1999 paying a coupon of 5-5/8 pct and priced at 102; lead manager Salomon Brothers International said. XLF L 1541.

Zurich: The coupon Nomura Securities Co. Ltd's 500 mln Swiss francs, two tranches issue of convertible notes and bonds has been indicated at 1-1/2 pct with par pricing. Nomura Bank (Switzerland) Ltd said. XKKO 0933.

Paris: French National Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole said it was launching a two billion franc domestic bond, split into two tranches, maturing in 1997. XLF L 1537.

Cape Town: South Africa announced that financial institutions would no longer be required to invest large parts of their foreign government-prescribed gifts. XLF B 1245.

London: Sparkassen SDS is issuing a 100 mln dirs Eurobond due March 22, 1999 paying a coupon of 10-5/8 pct and priced at 102-00; lead manager Drevel Durrum Lambert Securities Ltd said. XLFN 1547.

Interbank Rates

	CALL	ONE MONTH	THREE MONTHS
LDN	13 12-3/4	13 12-7/8	13 12-7/8
FFT	5.80/85	6.10/20	6.40/50
PAT	8-1/2-16/XG6	8-7/16 9/16	8-13/16 15/16
ZUR	4-7/8 5-1/8	5-1/2 5-3/4	
BRL	8.50	8.00 1/16	8-1/4 5/16
BON	12-7/8 13-3/8	13 13-1/2	13-17/8 13-5/8
AMS	5.69/81	6.60/76	6.78/88
TOK	3.28/32 30/32	4.26/32 28/32	4.25/32 25/32
ECU	8.12 8.57	8.43 8.56	8.68 8.81

Interest Rates

	Period	Bid	Offered
	1 month	9-1/16	9-9/16
	3 months	9-1/16	9-9/16
	6 months	9-3/16	9-5/8
	1 year	9-3/16	9-11/16

BOMBAY

PR.CLOSE	OPEN	CLOSE	CANSHARE	175	--	--	GRASIN	99.50	100.50	102
ACC	293	301	297	CEN ENKA	2640	2630	2660	GREAT E	34.75	35.15
ALM CHEM	--	--	--	COLGATE	337.50	338.75	337.50	GUJ ALKL	151.25	151.25
ALV HIS	--	--	--	CRONT GR	--	775	800	GUJ HEAVY	12.50	11
ART FAB	--	--	--	DCM	10.50	9.50	10.50	HERO HONDA	32	30.50
ASHOK LEY	69	68	69	DEEP FERT	36	35.50	35.50	HIND CIBA	950	950
ASIA PAINT	217.50	220	220	DUNLOP	76	73	75	HIND COCOA	108.75	108
ATLAS COR	46	45	46	EI HOTELS	56	55	56	HIND LEV	78.50	78.50
AUTO CORP	70	75	74	ESCORTS	63	62.50	64	HIND MOTOR	34.75	34.50
BAJAJ AUTO	382.50	385	388	ESKATEF	137.50	138.75	136.25	HINDALCO	257.50	260
BAR RAYON	355	355	352.50	ESSAR SPG	21.50	21.50	21.75	HOECHST	705	710
BK BOND	127	126	131	FOOD SPL	--	--	--	IND ORG	29	28
BLO PLAST	--	--	--	FORBES	64	61	59	IND RAYON	86	87
BOM DYE	133.50	136.50	134	GAR POLY	78.75	76.25	78.75	INDROL	300	301.25
BSE INDEX	353.53	348.00	348.00	GLINDIA	91	90	93.50	INGERSOLL	360	355
BUR WEL	190	185	190	GNFC	47	46.50	47	ITC	59	58

FRANKFURT

STOCK	LAST PR-CLOSE
AEG	213.5 214.0
AKSIAZ VR	1779.0 1777.0
BADENWERK	184.0 183.0
BAEFL	209.9 208.3
BAF	299.5 297.5
BAF B	359.0 356.0
BAF VER	369.0 368.0
BBC	448.0 449.0
BHF	491.0 482.0
BHJ	526.5 522.8
CONVERZBK	244.8 241.0
CONTI GUNN	263.5 244.0
DAETHER	674.5 672.0
DEUTSC BANK	514.0 513.5
DLY	485.0 488.0
DRESDNER B	312.3 310.5
DT BACCOB	169.3 169.5
FAZ INDEX	560.41 558.76
FEUDUMHOF	334.5-332.3
FOODSCHNEIDER	395.15-398.0
HARPERN	439.5-437.5
HOECHST AG	299.7 298.5
HOESCH	241.8 241.8
HORTEN	227.0 225.0
HUSSEL HLD	470.0 469.0
KALT SALZ	210.5 208.5
KARSTADT	425.0 427.0
KAUFHOF	419.0 418.5
KLECK H	180.0 181.7
KLOEK H	160.0 162.5
LINDE	796.0 796.0
LUFTHANSA	162.5 163.0
MAN	260.2 263.0
MANNESMAN	231.5 230.9
MERCEDES	536.0 536.0
METALLGES	402.0 405.3
MINDORF PF	296.0 299.5
NOISK NYD	44.10 44.00
PHILIP KDN	678.0 664.0
POSCHE	719.0 720.0
PREUSSAG	252.0 254.5
PWA	285.5 285.0
RHEINMETAL	469.0 463.0
RME	251.0 251.0
RME P	220.0 219.5
SALAMANDER	334.0 333.0
SCHERINGER	612.5 613.5
SEL	299.0 298.8
SIEGENS	538.0 531.5
THYSSEN	232.0 230.3
VARTA	351.0 355.0
VEGA	291.5 290.5
VEN	170.0 169.5
VOLKSWAGEN	352.5 352.2

TOKYO

STOCK	LAST PR-CLOSE	MITSUB CP	1530	1510
AIJINMOTO	2590	2580	MITSUB EST	2600
AKAI ELEC	702	704	MITSUB HVY	1110
AKOI	1436	1400	MITSU CO	1170
ASAMI GLS	210.5	209.5	MITSUKOSHI	2270
ASAHI OPT	874	888	MITSUMI EL	990
BANK TOKYO	1700	1700	MICRON	1280
BRIDGESTON	1400	1350	NIHON CHNT	1230
CANON	1580	1490	NIKKO SEC	1950
CASIO COMP	1370	1340	NIP ELECT	1800
CHUGAI PHM	1470	1470	NIP KOKAN	928
CITIZEN W	975	970	NIP OIL	1710
D-ICHI KAN	3520	3520	NIP STEEL	950
DAI NIP IK	886	890	NIP YUSEN	922
DAI NIP PT	2540	2520	NIS MOTOR	1490
DAI NIP SC	971	975	NOHARA SEC	3600
DAI NIP TO	931	931	OBHA CO	934
DAICEL	920	920	OLYMPUS	1190
DAIMA H	2010	2020	OPENTA OCN	1410
DAIMI SEC	2300	2340	PIioneer	3050
DAIKIN	1950	1950	RENON	974
DAIKIN BFG	1920	1920	RICHL	1150
DAIKIN E	1460	1440	RICOH	1190
FUTSU	3630	3560	SANKYO	2230
FUJI BANK	3240	3200	SANTO ELEC	891
FUJI PHOTO	1630	1640	SEIYU ST	2150
FUJISAMA	1630	1640	SEKISUI PB	1820
FUJITA CP	1990	1990	SHARP	1250
HITACHI	1600	1570	SHISEIDO	1660
HONDA MOT	1960	1960	SONY	6910
ISETAN	2320	2350	SUMITOMO	1340
ITO YOKADO	3600	3590	TAISEI	1800
JAP SYM RU	1250	1250	TAISHO MRN	1380
JAPAN AIR	15600	15500	TAKEDA CH	2300
JAPAN MET	979	995	TEIJIN	840
KANSAI EL	4770	4810	TKO NEW IX	432.77
KAO SOAP	1580	1580	TOKIO MRN	2150
KAWASAKI H	950	935	TOKYO ELEC	1320
KAWASAK				

BUSINESS

Growth to average 1.8pc per year

NATO-CIA report gloomy on Gorbachev reforms

BRUSSELS, March 15. (Reuter): Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev will be unable to bridge the Soviet Union's economic gap with the West by the year 2000 even if his reforms succeed, according to a NATO report made available yesterday.

The report, based on findings by the US Central Intelligence Agency, said at best, Soviet economic growth would average only 2.7 per cent annually up to the year 2000.

It said bad weather could jeopardise the success of Gorbachev's entire economic restructuring programme.

"Bad luck with the weather... could trigger an agricultural failure severe enough to exacerbate current consumer dissatisfaction and threaten the success of Gorbachev's reform effort," the report said.

Loses

Three model scenarios - "Gorbachev wins," "Gorbachev loses" and "Gorbachev doesn't matter" - had been used in the CIA analysis of the Soviet leader's reform programme from 1986 to 2000, the report said.

"Soviet GNP (gross national product) growth would not exceed 2.7 per cent a year in the years 1986-2000 in any of the scenarios," said the report, entitled "Long term projections for the Soviet economy."

Findings

"Even this rate would only be achieved if Gorbachev's reforms after a period of initial disruption meet with complete success and favourable weather conditions sustain farm output," it added.

The findings compared with official Soviet growth targets of



Mikhail Gorbachev

four to five per cent, the report said.

The "Gorbachev wins" scenario foresaw growth rising to nearly three per cent a year throughout the 1990s after a few years of disruption which would hamper growth.

The report said some real progress could be expected "particularly if 'perestroika' (restructuring) continues to be implemented without major political backfiring." But this was likely to be slow.

"Even if Gorbachev wins," the gains from developing or acquiring and using new technology and raising labour motivations and skills are not likely to come

quickly enough or in doses necessary to close the technological gap with the West during the rest of this century," it added.

Disruption

Under the "Gorbachev loses" scenario, in which a period of disruption would be followed by bureaucratic resistance to reforms and political conflict in the Kremlin, growth would be held at an average of only 1.7 per cent.

In the final scenario, in which reforms would be watered down or not implemented vigorously enough, growth would average 1.8 per cent per year, the report said.

Nabisco chief faces big challenges

Extremely lucrative offer

NEW YORK, March 15. (Reuter): Louis Gerstner Jr. the marketing wizard who takes charge at RJR Nabisco Inc. next month, faces the tough job of cutting the firm's massive debt load while managing a stable of well-known consumer products.

Gerstner, who has been president and second-in-command at the financial services giant American Express Co., could be the right man for the job despite his lack of experience in the food or tobacco industries, analysts said today.

The consumer products giant was bought last month by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Co. for \$25 billion, in the largest takeover on record.

The departure of chief executive F. Ross Johnson, who had himself attempted a takeover of RJR, set off a major corporate headhunt. Gerstner was named to the post on Monday.

Skills

The new owners of the Atlanta-based company that makes Winston, Salem and Camel cigarettes, as well as Oros, shredded Wheat and Fig Newtons, lured Gerstner with what was said to be an extremely

lucrative offer. Several analysts said he was attracted by the money and the challenge of heading a major corporation.

Gerstner, 47, graduated from Harvard Business School and worked for the prestigious consulting firm McKinsey and Co. before joining American Express. He is well-known for his strong marketing and managing skills.

"He's a superb marketer and a very good administrator," said tobacco analyst Ronald Morrow of Smith Barney, Harris Upham.

Gerstner's first job will be overseeing massive asset sales, likely to total \$7 billion to eight billion in cut RJR's debt taken on the buyout, analysts said.

The units most likely to be sold include Del Monte and Planters, producers of food and snacks, and the Fleischmann's and Blue Bonnet Margarine brands, they said.

The company, the 19th largest US industrial concern, is lumbering under its debt at a time when the US cigarette industry is in decline due to changing consumer attitudes.

Only two weeks ago RJR killed its much-ballyhooed

"smokeless cigarette" Premier, which analysts said cost \$200 million to develop and was projected to cost a total of \$1 billion if it had not been halted.

"That's the golden goose and you don't want to kill it," said Morrow regarding the tobacco business.

Debt

With interest payments of \$3 billion a year to pay off its takeover debt, RJR will have to take a new look at its capital improvements, including a \$6 billion, multi-year upgrading of its baking business.

But if it cuts too deeply RJR may be hard-pressed to keep up with competitors for super-market shelf-space.

Archival Philip Morris Cos Inc., which owns General Foods, last fall bought Kraft Inc. for \$13.1 billion. Strong competition from such foreign giants as Unilever PLC also points to the need for remaining competitive in an increasingly global market.

In the bakery business, Pepperidge Farm, a unit of Campbell Soup Co., and Keebler Co. are spending to upgrade plants and improve baking technology, a threat to Nabisco.

Balkan states open first economic meeting

ANKARA, March 15. (Reuter): Six Balkan countries today opened their first ministerial-level talks on economic and trade ties after decades of regional disputes.

The two-day meeting in Ankara brings together NATO members Turkey and Greece, Bulgaria and Romania from the Warsaw Pact, non-aligned Yugoslavia and communist Albania.

"Turkey believes in the existence of a basis for developing economic ties despite political and economic differences among Balkan countries," Turkish State Minister Yusuf Ozal told the meeting.

"Multi-faceted and bilateral ties between Balkan countries should be developed further to ensure an atmosphere of lasting peace, understanding and co-

operation."

No agenda was announced for the talks, which follow a first meeting of Balkan foreign ministers in Belgrade 13 months ago.

Albania's presence at the Belgrade talks, which had some success in easing regional tensions, was significant after decades of isolation.

"The ties of friendship imposed by the foreign ministers should reflect on all relations between Balkan countries," Greece's Deputy National Economy Minister, Yannos Papantoniou, told reporters on his arrival in Ankara last evening.

The Bulgarian side is headed by Foreign Economic Relations Minister Andrei Lukyanov.

Albania by State Planning Commission chairman Niko Gjyzioni, Romania by Foreign Trade Minister Ioan Ungur and Yugoslavia

by Foreign Trade Minister Nenad Krstic.

Turkish officials said Ankara was likely to bring up at the talks charges that Bulgaria was trying to assimilate by force its ethnic Turkish Muslim minority of up to 1.5 million people.

Ankara and Athens, at odds over Cyprus and Aegean Sea rights, have also been sparing over the property and other rights of a 10,000-strong Turkish Muslim minority in Greece.

The two countries, whose bilateral trade volume was only \$164 million in the first 10 months of 1988, have expressed interest in developing tourist relations.

Gjyzioni said Albanian-Turkish trade volume, which stood at \$3.3 million in the first 10 months of 1988, was developing through the efforts of both countries.

Bush voices concern about homeless

WASHINGTON, March 15. (AP): President George Bush yesterday called homelessness "an affront to the American dream" and said he wants to help get "ragged and pathetic figures" off the streets of the nation's capital and urban America.

Addressing a legislative conference of the Independent Insurance Agents of America, Bush talked of riding in his limousine near the White House and seeing people "on the heating grates."

"It's a national shame," the President said in a speech that touched on initiatives he proposed to a joint session of Congress on Feb. 9.

City officials estimate there are some 8,000 to 10,000 homeless in Washington although activists for the homeless have said they believe the figure ranges to 15,000.

Nationally, experts agree there are no reliable figures, although research shows that the level of homelessness can range from 300,000 to 600,000 on any given night.

In his spending blueprint for the budget year beginning Oct. 1, Bush proposed \$644 million for a programme to find housing for the homeless. He also called for a \$50-million programme to assist volunteers and community organisations working with the homeless.

Nakasone should testify on scandal: LDP elders

TOKYO, March 15. (Reuter): The elders of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party have decided former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone should testify in a probe into the country's biggest political scandal, major newspapers said today.

LDP leaders decided at a meeting yesterday that Nakasone must answer questions on the scandal before parliament for the sake of the troubled party, the Yomiuri Shimbun and other papers reported.

Outcome

Nakasone, still a Member of Parliament, has denied any wrongdoing in connection with the shares-for-favours scandal and refused to testify before parliament.

Nakasone aides acknowledged that a meeting of LDP elders, including former Prime Ministers Takeo Fukuda and Zenko Suzuki, took place, but declined comment on its outcome.

The scandal, involving payments from the Recruit publishing and telecommunications conglomerate to more than 100 public figures, has touched almost every member of the LDP leadership and led to the resignation of three cabinet ministers.

Rating

Political analysts say Nakasone must submit to questioning or the LDP's hold on power will be further eroded.

The rating of Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita's administration has failed to post war lows in

popularity polls since the Recruit scandal blew up last July.

It has been alleged by opposition politicians and the press that Nakasone arranged the sale of a multimillion-dollar computer to Recruit by telecommunications giant Nippon Telegraph and Telephone.

So far, 12 people have been arrested in the scandal. Parliament has been stalled since last Wednesday over opposition demands that Nakasone give testimony on any connection he may have had with the firm.

Major newspapers quoting sources in the Tokyo prosecutor's office, reported today that Nakasone and his son Hirofumi, also a Member of Parliament, received cheques

from Recruit but returned them unopened.

A Nakasone aide denied the report.

"I don't know where the report comes from," a Nakasone aide told Reuters by telephone. "There was never any contact (with Recruit)."

The prosecutor's office declined comment on the report, which appeared in the Asahi Shimbun, the Mainichi Shimbun and other newspapers.

The newspaper reported that the names of Nakasone and his son appeared on a list of 15 politicians who allegedly received cheques from Recruit company last August. The list was confiscated from Recruit by the prosecutors, the report said.

Riyadh to market oil products

Saudis seek joint ventures with foreign firms

ABU DHABI, March 15. (UPI): Saudi Oil Minister Nishan Nazer said the kingdom is seeking joint ventures with foreign companies to market its crudes and oil products abroad following its successful agreement with US giant Texaco.

"There are negotiations with various parties in Europe and the Far East to enter into joint investments for marketing outside the kingdom," Nazer said at a press conference in Saudi eastern city of Dhahran.

Nazer's remarks were carried today by the state-run Saudi Press Agency, SPA, monitored in Abu Dhabi.

"The kingdom's long-term strategy is based on finding a sort of integration in the oil industry that combined production and marketing," Nazer said. "Entering into partnerships is part of the process to implement this strategy."

Prices

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, currently produces about 4.5 million barrels a day according to an agreement by OPEC's 13 members to stabilise prices at \$18 a barrel.

Nazer did not name the companies involved in the negotiations, but Gulf-based oil indus-

try sources said these included the US Exxon Corp, Total and Elf Aquitaine in France, plus other unidentified firms with stakes in Japan, Indonesia and Spain.

In November, Saudi Arabia signed a \$800 million contract under which it bought half of Texaco's refineries in three American states — Texas, Louisiana and Delaware, and allowed the kingdom to market some 600,000 barrels of petroleum products a day in 23 American states.

The agency said Nazer was speaking after the first meeting of the board of directors of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company

(Saudi ARAMCO) which in November took over management and operations from ARAMCO, which was owned by the four US corps — Exxon, Mobil, Texaco and Chevron, in partnership with Saudi Arabia.

Markets

The board was appointed on Sunday to report to the kingdom's Supreme Petroleum Council, chaired by King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz as part of a three-year-old restructuring plan that gave more emphasis to downstream operations.

"The aim of forming the Supreme Council and the board

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Venezuela to supply power to Colombia

CARACAS, March 15. (OPECNA): Venezuelan Minister of Energy and Mines Dr. Celestino Armas is flying to Bogota to finalise an agreement, involving the supply of Venezuelan electricity to Colombia.

The 400-km Venezuelan power grid, which will be used to bring supplies to neighbouring Colombia, links the northwestern city of Maracaibo to Cuetecita which lies close to Colombia's Maicao area.

According to Venezuelan sources, the scheme will meet the needs of millions of inhabitants of Colombia's northern Atlantic region.

Julio Cesar Guerra, president of the Chamber of Representatives of the Colombian Parliament, told the Inter Press Service news agency (IPS) that the electricity needs of the area had risen by six per cent in the last few years.

Texas, Egypt to sign agricultural ventures

AUSTIN, Texas, March 15. (UPI): The state of Texas and Egypt will sign an agreement this week pledging to co-operate in a variety of prospective agricultural ventures.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower and the Egyptian ambassador to the United States, Abdel Raouf Reedy, will sign a bilateral memorandum of understanding tomorrow at the Egyptian embassy in Washington, D.C.

The memorandum calls for Texas and Egypt to "gainfully operate and expand" in such areas as dairy production, beef cattle breeding, fattening and processing grain sorghum and cotton production and aquaculture.

"It (agreement) brings a formal recognition that Texas is a trading partner, not just for a quick deal and then," said Alan Welch spokesman for the Texas Department of Agriculture. "It's a framework for future trade and agreements."

Welch said the agency has similar bilateral agreements with Israel and Mexico.

N. Yemen, Iraq try to stabilise oil market

SANAA, March 15. (Reuter): North Yemen and Iraq have agreed to consult each other on ways to stabilise world oil markets, Iraqi Oil Minister Isam Abdul-Rahim Al-Chaiabi said today.

He was speaking before leaving for South Yemen after a three-day visit to North Yemen, where he had talks on oil cooperation with Oil and Mineral Resources Minister Ahmed Ali Al-Muharraqi since last month.

"It has been agreed to stabilise and to increase oil exports," the North Yemen News Agency (SABA) quoted Chaiabi as saying.

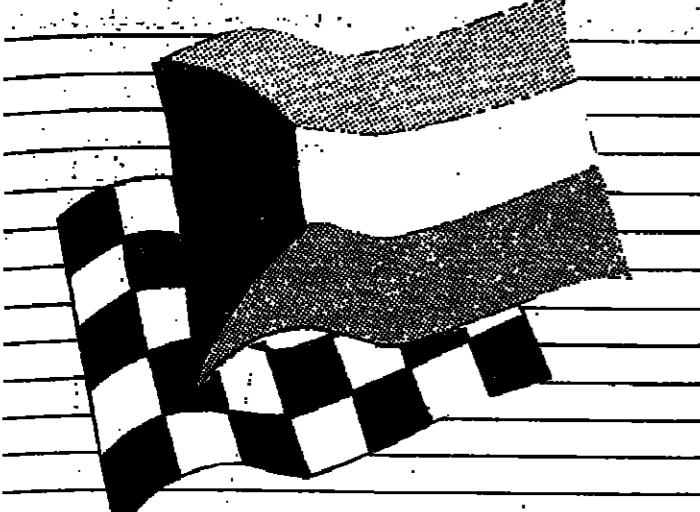
Iraq and North Yemen joined Egypt and Jordan last month in setting up an economic alliance, the Arab Co-operation Council.

Oil industry sources say North Yemen, which had planned to raise its oil exports to 220,000 barrels per day (BPD) in the first half of 1989, will freeze exports at 190,000 BPD.

Engineering magnate Bechtel dies

SAN FRANCISCO, March 15. (Reuter): Stephen Davison Bechtel, who turned the Bechtel Group Inc into one of the largest construction and engineering companies in the world, died on yesterday aged 88, the company said.

Bechtel, the son of company founders Warren and Clara Bechtel, was senior director of the firm. He had served as president from 1935 until the 1960s, when he turned the job over to his son Stephen Bechtel Jr.



10TH KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL RALLY

AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT

40 at the starting line

Ready, steady, go!

By Gail Seery

TODAY sees the start of the KT Club's 10th Kuwait International Rally. 40 drivers have entered the two day event, more than double the number of starters for Qatar, and more than in any round of the Championship except Lebanon last year.

This reflects the level of support for the sport from the rank and file members of the club. Without their participation there would be no rally.

Mohammed Bin Sulayem and Robin Morgan will be the first to leave the ramp, after the rally is flagged off by H.E. Sheikh Fahd.

Suleyman is driving his Group A Toyota Celica GT-4. Following him will be Saeed Hajri and Steve Bond in the Ford Sierra Cosworth RS 500.

Ahmed Al Helal and Faizah Al Rashid will be the first Kuwaitis to start the rally.

This year some of the seedings look reassured, but this is because Group A cars must start first, followed by Group N, Group B, and then Group S cars. So novices like Jeff McCarlson, and visitors like Ron Oakley, neither of whom would have merited a top start number under the old system, go out before the rally veterans, Tareq Al Wazzan, Ahmed Al Zafiri, and Ottmar Lange.

Sultan Al Sowaidi of Qatar has a great deal of experience, and is driving the Toyota Celica Turbo for this event. This is definitely going to be the most powerful car entered, but he will have to wait till number 10.

Sowaidi said that traction was going to be his main problem for this event: due to the heavy rains, parts of the special stages had to be changed because drivers could no longer get through the mud and water without getting stuck. More than one driver was spotted stuck in the mud — some rather further off the rally route than might be expected.

Group B and C cars cannot score points in the Middle East Championship. Therefore all the drivers of the Group B cars are out for a top finish position.

Three drivers in particular will have to be careful about picking up points for the National Championship, Eid Falah, Tareq Al Wazzan and Ahmed Al Helal.

Falah will have a definite advantage in his Range Rover, and if he wins this event will be uncatchable, assuming he finishes the rally.

Participation

The rally sees the participation of most of the regular drivers, like Tareq Al Alyan, Younis Ali, Ahmed Al Mulla and Nasser Mousalem, and also some newcomers to the sport.

The main competition is likely to be between Suleyman and Hajri, but Ottmar Lange, Sultan Al Sowaidi, certain to race to win. Other drivers to watch for are Tareq Al Wazzan, Eid Falah, Ahmed Al Helal, Mohammed Al Husseini and Ahmed Zafiri. Any one of these drivers is capable of a good result.

If one of the professionals has a problem, there is unlikely to be the sort of gap we saw in past rallies. As Mohammed Bin Sulayem says, "this rally is demanding, as there is no room for error."

Elsewhere in this supplement you will find background information about the rally and the drivers. It is worth travelling out to see the action if you can spare the time, but please remember to put safety first at all times:

The Clerk of the Course for this event is Richard Bondi. He is supported by Abdulla Barkawi, Jacques Lombardo and Debbie Hayes.

Hat-trick for Al Helal?

KUWAIT'S Ahmed Al Helal, looking to win his third consecutive Kuwait Rally Championship, will be aiming to make up ground in this year's title race when the Kuwait International Rally gets under way on March 16.

The Rothmans-sponsored driver, who will once again be partnered by regular co-driver Fahad Al Rashid in his Group A Toyota Corolla, is currently lying third behind Eid Falah and Tariq Al Wazzan in the race for the national crown.

But as the season reaches a crucial point in the local championship, Helal could set himself up to retain his title by being the first Kuwaiti to cross the finish line.

"The Kuwait International

is the second last rally of the season and whoever wins it has a very good chance of winning the national title," he said. "I feel very confident that we can do well and retain the championship."

"I am looking forward to this year's International," he said. "My plan is to get into a good position by the end of the first day and then put in my major challenge on day two. Although I rolled the car during my last rally, everything has been sorted out and we are ready to go."

Helal, chairman of the Kuwait Touring Club Sports Division, is one of the region's most consistent drivers. His most outstanding performance outside the Middle East was in the 4,000 km 1985 Rothmans Pharaohs Rally in Egypt where he finished sixth overall and won the Rothmans Mitsubishi Challenge.

Rally calendar

Kuwait National Championship 1988/89 - final round to be announced

Kuwait National Championship 1989

Round 1	: September 22
Round 2	: October 20
Round 3	: November 23

Middle East Championship

Jordan	: May 17th - 19th
Lebanon	: October 13th - 15th
Oman	: October 25th - 27th
Dubai	: November 30th - December 1st

Marlboro Desert Challenge

Qatar	: October 5th & 6th
Kuwait	: November 16th & 17th
Dubai	: December 14th & 15th

Ian Bain looks back at some great moments in Kuwait's rallying history

Motor rallying takes a firm hold in Kuwait

THE humble origins of motorsport in Kuwait go back to 1974 when Rothmans introduced the first auto test, a fast and furious event held at Qadsia Club Stadium under the burning sun of late May. Forty-five cars of all shapes and makes — from Alfa Romeos to Mazdas and Mercedes, even a Plymouth and an Austin, took part before a sizeable crowd of spectators who were as much entertained by the mishaps as by the driving skills.

It was won by Robert Jones in a Mercedes 280, followed closely by Abdullah Al Shalhi in a Mazda with the BMW 1600 of Abdul Wahab Abdulrahman in third.

A similar Rothmans auto test followed in a much cooler December of that year, this time at the Katam Club, with 47 participants including the Plymouth but without any of the four Alfa Romeos which had contested the earlier round.

Victory went to Marvi Kashkoush in an Opel Commodore, with the Mercedes of Torolof Krager in second place and Michel Saleh's Datsun 240 third.

Delighted with the success of these tests of man and machinery, Rothmans took a giant leap when they staged — with the on-going assistance of the KT Club — the first rally in the Gulf region run according to FIA rules.

It was a much simpler affair than the Kuwait internationals of recent years, a 36-km circular course at Mutla which was covered ten times by the competitors.

Records
Half the entry of 34 vehicles (among them the faithful Plymouth) made it to the finish and the overall winner was the expatriate Roger Taylor in a Honda Civic.

Ten months later, in February 1976, the second Rothmans Kuwait Rally was a much more elaborate affair. The distance was raised to 500 km from 360 and it was run over two days, the first at Al Mutla and the second at Al



Rally drivers pose with their cars.



Ahmed Al-Helal and Fahad Al-Rashed.



A group of winners proudly display their trophies.



After a race, all smiles for a group photo.

Volvo 244 and Gregory Milne in a similar vehicle.

Murphy turned the tables in 1978 when the rally took a huge leap forward with 56 entries competing over 980 kms. Murphy's Volvo finished ahead of the BMW of Tareq Al Wazzan (partnered by John Spiller who went on to navigate for Saeed Al Hajri and Mohammed Bin Sulayem) and the Renault 16 of Gerard Asfar.

It was the first time that the rally had been linked to a series, entitled somewhat curiously The Final Championship of the Middle East, and involving Cyprus, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

It's also interesting to note that Michel Saleh was described even in those days as "daring." His 1978 hopes ended in a ditch.

If a 1978 had seemed a grand affair, the following year was spectacular. The distance was increased to 1,500 km — possibly the longest in the history of Kuwait motorsport — and the event contained some of the greatest names in international rally, among them Shekhar Mehta of Kenya, Frenchman Jean Ragnotti and Sweden's Harry Kalstroem.

The Datsun 1600 of Mehta was followed home by Kalstroem's and Ragnotti's renault with Britain's Mike Foss taking fourth place in a Mitsubishi Lancer.

In seventh spot was Kuwait's Ahmed Al Helal, another driver who will be taking part in this week's rally.

Sadly, that was the last year of the Rothmans Middle East Championship, but the series opened the door first for the Gulf Challenge, then the Middle East Challenge and, finally, the FISA Middle East Rally Championship.

Middle East Championship Winners

1979/80	Face Chihab	BMW 2002
1980/81	Tareq Al Wazzan	Toyota Celica
1981/82	Michel Saleh	Toyota Celica
1982/83	Michel Saleh	Toyota Celica
1983/84	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Nissan 240RS
1986/87	Ahmed Al Helal	Daihatsu Charade
1987/88	Ahmed Al Helal	Daihatsu Charade
1988/89	??	??

Kuwait National Championship Winners

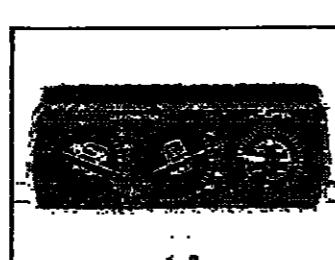
1979/80	Face Chihab	BMW 2002
1980/81	Tareq Al Wazzan	Toyota Celica
1981/82	Michel Saleh	Toyota Celica
1982/83	Michel Saleh	Toyota Celica
1983/84	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Nissan 240RS
1986/87	Ahmed Al Helal	Daihatsu Charade
1987/88	Ahmed Al Helal	Daihatsu Charade
1988/89	??	??



Some Kuwaiti rally winners with Datsun's Ahmed Babtain.

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The new Patrol is one of the few cars in the world which was specially designed for the Middle East Area and the GCC countries.

Its superior performance is attributed to nine advantages over its competitors which in the end result places Nissan Patrol as the No. 1 4x4 car.

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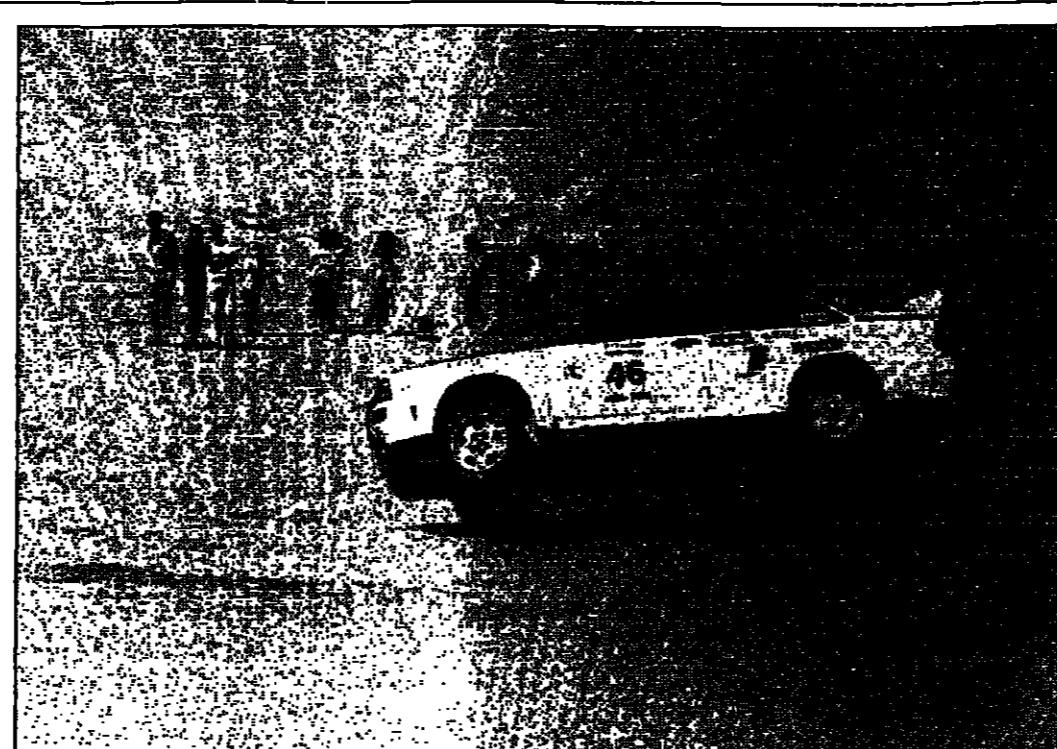
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Mohammed Bin Sulayem won after a protest.



Saleh, the most spectacular driver in the Kuwait rally '88.



Sulayem, Morgan and Hajri (right) relax at Entertainment City between stages.

1988 rally marked by controversy

THE 1988 Kuwait International Rally was surrounded with controversy which had little to do with the rally itself. Right from the start things seemed determined to go wrong.

About a month before the event the KT Club received a telex from Pierre de Connick at FISA, saying that the B-seeded drivers, Saeed Al Hajri and Mohammed Bin Sulayem would not be allowed to start the rally driving Group B cars. This was contrary to instructions received by the other clubs.

Foolishly perhaps, the Club believed its colleagues in the other Gulf organisations, and it was only when a repeat telex from FISA was received, days before the event, that Clerk of the Course Wael Khoury was forced to inform the Toyota and Rothmans teams that they would not be allowed to start the rally. frantic phone calls to FISA led to an admission by Pierre de Connick that there had been an error.

Upset

The rally itself went reasonably smooth, but saw a major upset in that all local drivers who were expected to do well, Ahmed Al Helal, Tareq Al Wazzan and Ahmed Al Zafiri went out of the event on stage 1. The main Kuwait challenge therefore came from Jose Miskulin and navigator Klaus Schwingenshoegel in the Nissan 240RS and Mohammed Al Hussein in a Toyota Celica. Hussein rolled out of the rally near to the end of the event, and Miskulin picked up maximum points for the local championship.

The rally suited Hajri's Audi Quattro A2, and Sulayem was complaining of a lack of traction with his Toyota Celica TwinCam turbo. There did not appear to be any doubt about which driver would take a win in the event.

However, on the first stage of the second morning, Steve Bond submitted his time cards early, after a mis-statement by the marshal. Later the Toyota team brought a protest, which was upheld by a panel of stewards, sitting in conference with the FISA observer. Al Hajri was awarded a two minute penalty which pushed him behind Sulayem, into second place. The tragedy is that Hajri had certainly been taking things easy on the second day and could arguably have made up enough time to have kept his win.

This result soured the relations between the teams for some time afterwards, and spoiled the memory of what was actually a good rally, with some excellent driving from all competitors.



Lange (left) and Saleh - an unlikely couple



A different kind of ride for the participants.

Al Ghanim EUROPACAR the ultimate in service

YUSUFA AL GHANIM AND SONS, sole agents for EUROPACAR car rental in Kuwait, is considered one of the leading companies in the Middle East, according to Anis Tayar, Spot and Leasing Sales Manager at Al Ghanim.

Al Ghanim strives to provide customers with the ultimate in services, he said. It has a wide-range of hire services and extends the period of hire from a single day to as long the customer desires. The broad range of car models enables the company to cater to the needs of every customer. There are more than 500 cars which can be hired with or without drivers, he added.

The company's 12 branches are distributed all over Kuwait. The car hire service at Kuwait International Airport operates 24 hours a day. Additionally, most five star hotels in Kuwait, like Kuwait Regency, SAS Sheraton, Meridien, and the Messilah have the company's rental services.

Another rental office has been established in the Al Ghanim main garage in Shuwaikh to provide customers with the opportunity of delivering rental cars to any of the company's branches.

The Kuwait International Airport branch of Al Ghanim's assists customers in getting driving permits in Kuwait, provided they have an international driving licence. The company also provides businessmen with portable phone service.

Payments are accepted through credit cards, in addition to free international reservations, Tayar said.

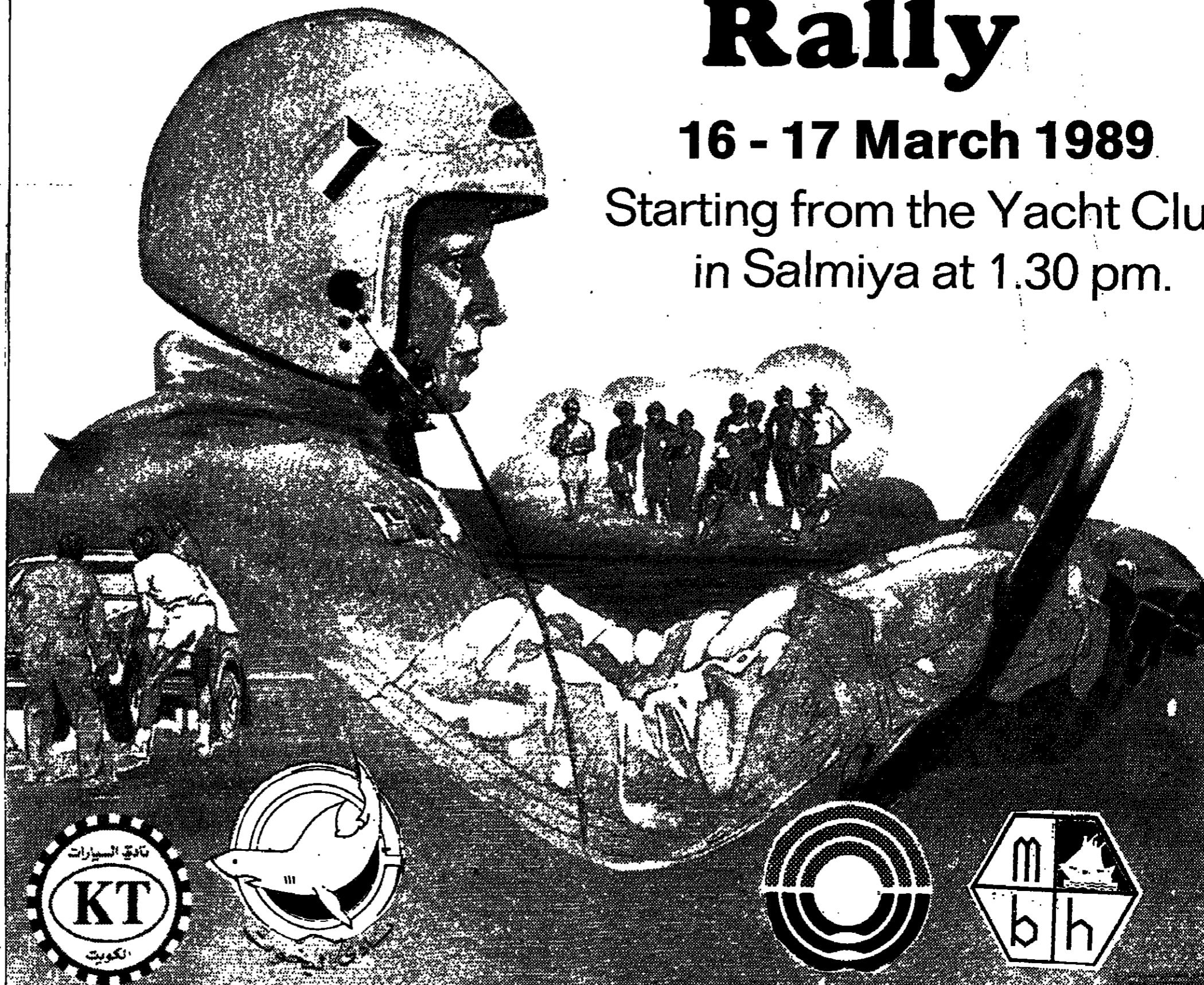
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Al Sabah**



10th Kuwait International Rally

16 - 17 March 1989

Starting from the Yacht Club
in Salmiya at 1.30 pm.

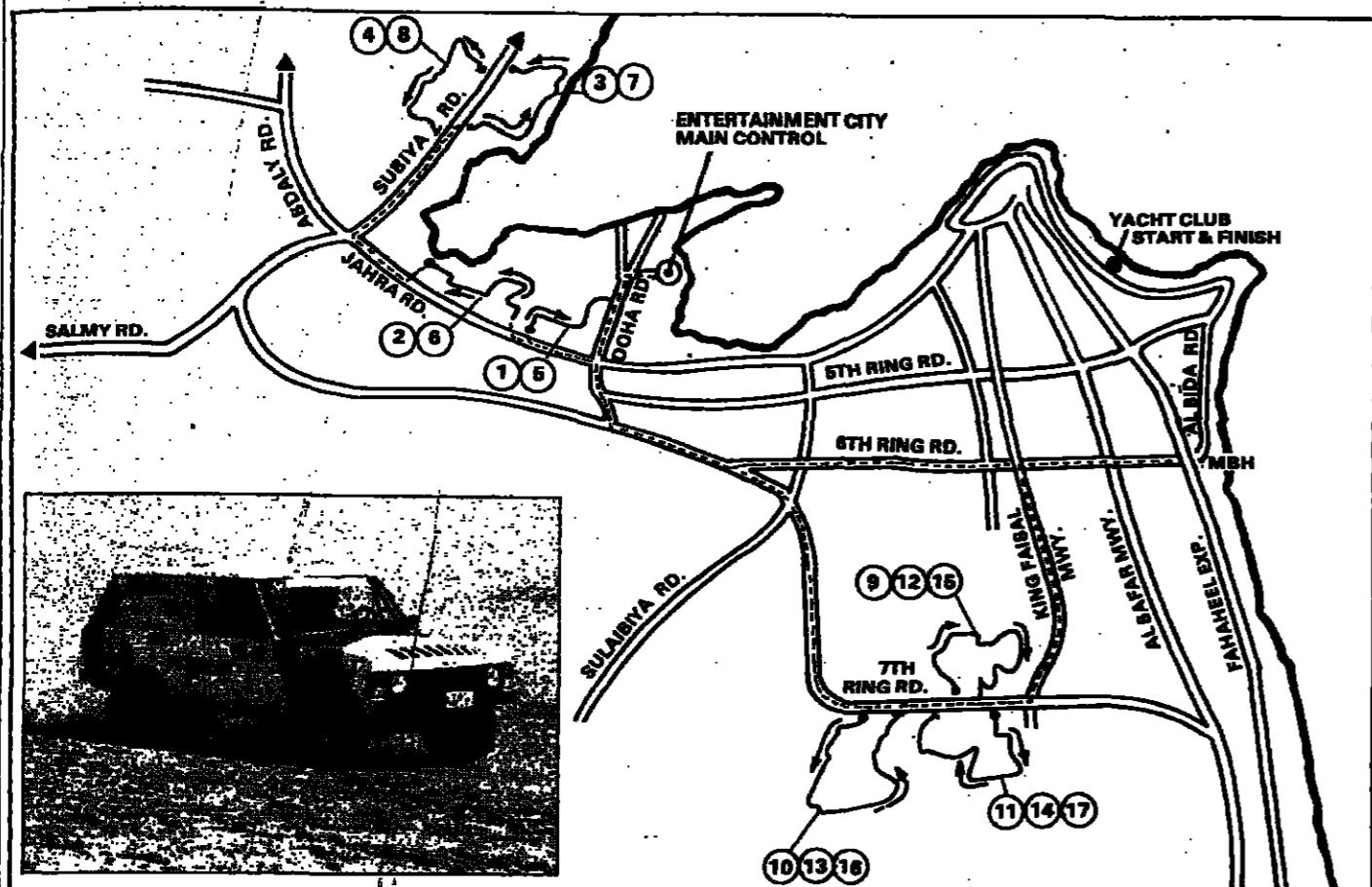


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**10TH KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL RALLY:
AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT**

Spectators guide to the rally
Where you can see the action



Results: season so far

1st Round — January 1988	1. Ahmed Al Hejaili/Fahad Al Rasheed	Toyota Corolla	1:27:59	4. Ahmed Zafri/Ghazi Zafri	Daihatsu Charade	0:59:36
2. Tareq Al Wazzan/Khaled Khalifa	Range Rover	1:31:46	5. L. Featherstonehough/K. Speak	Volvo 240	1:02:16	
3. Faez Chihab/Hassan Chihab	Mitsubishi Lancer	1:34:06				
4. Ahmed Al Nasser/A. Al Khaneem	Mitsubishi Lancer	1:37:25				
5. Tarek Al Alyan/Khalid Al Alyan	Charade	1:40:52				
2nd Round (International) March 16/17, 1988	1. Josef Miskulin/Siegfried Schlingensiegl	Nissan 240RS	2:19:25			
2. Faez Chihab/Hassan Chihab	Mitsubishi Lancer	2:38:04	2. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Range Rover	1:13:32	
3. Ahmed Al Nasser/Bader Al Zaidi	Mitsubishi Lancer	2:44:44	3. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Toyota Corolla	1:15:21	
4. Tareq Al Alyan/Khalid Al Alyan	Daihatsu Charade	2:48:29	4. Ahmed Al Birzani/Mohd Al Zaidi	Daihatsu Charade	1:22:26	
5. Jumaa Al Marai/Adam Marai	Nissan Patrol	2:51:11	5. Nasser Mousalem/Mufeed Al Ali	Nissan 240RS	1:24:39	
3rd Round — April 1988						
1. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Range Rover	1:42:36	6th Round — December 1988			
2. Mohd Al Birzani/Mohd Al Zaidi	Toyota Celica	1:43:12	1. Tareq Al Wazzan/Khaled Khalifa	Opel Manta	1:10:32	
3. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Mitsubishi Lancer	1:44:25	2. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Toyota Corolla	1:11:39	
4. Tareq Al Alyan/Khalid Al Alyan	Rocky	2:02:45	3. Ahmed Al Mafsi/Ibrahim Al	Nissan 240RS	1:40:06	
5. Nour Al Hasawi/Ali Shabani	Datsun	2:06:33	4. Nasser Mousalem/Mufeed Al Ali	Datsun Sylvia	2:19:23	
* Faez Chihab and Ahmed Al Zafri disqualified			5. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Daihatsu Charade	2:21:05	
4th Round — September 1988						
1. Tareq Al Wazzan/Khaled Khalifa	Range Rover	0:52:47	7th Round — February 1989			
2. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Range Rover	0:52:55	1. El Farah/Sadeq Ashkhanani	Range Rover	1:03:47	
3. Ahmed Al Hejaili/Fahad Al Rasheed	Toyota Corolla	0:55:38	2. Tareq Al Wazzan/Khaled Khalifa	Opel Manta 400	1:57:21	



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Kuwait Regency Palace Hotel 5728000 Ext. 6014, 6025

ARAB TIMES has prepared this guide to enable those who wish to do so to travel to see as much rally action as possible. We would like to urge caution, and to remind you that in the special stages the rally cars will be travelling as fast as possible.

Make sure you are not on the track. Please note that the cars tend to swing out particularly on fast bends, so you should take care to stand somewhere safe. As a general rule, the tracks the cars made during practice will tell you how far they are deviating from the path, but take no risks.

For those of you who don't wish to journey far from the main roads, you will be able to park your car and watch the start or finish procedures. Again, please don't get in the way, and please remember to take water with you.

Many of the cars will be servicing between stages, and this is another opportunity to see the cars and their drivers. Most teams tend to choose to service at the end of stages and are easy to spot, but remember to stay out of the way of the service crews who have to do a wide variety of jobs on the car in remarkably small time.

Remember that the crews are racing to a tight dead-line, and must get to the next time control on time; please do not delay them.

The rally consists of seventeen special stages. The first car will leave the Yacht Club on the Gulf Road at 1:30pm, and will then drive out to the first stage at Doha. The crews complete the first leg at 11:29pm, and restart the rally at 9 am the following morning. The rally will finish at 5:52pm at the Yacht Club.

Stage 1 & 5: DOHA 7.02 km — Thursday, March 16

The first car will start this stage at 2:23 pm, and again at 6:40pm.

The stage features a number of tight hairpins over ground which is bumpy in places — cars are unlikely to travel very fast over the first sections of the stage. The stage will

test both driver and navigation, and is likely to take its toll of gearboxes and suspensions. The second time this stage is covered will be at night.

Stage 2 & 6: AMGHARA 9.30 km 9.30 km — Thursday, March 16

The first car will start this stage at 2:46pm, and again at 7:03pm.

Parts of this stage, notably its spectacular jump, have been used before in local rallies. It is not a particularly fast stage, and like the others of the first day, could be very slippery in certain conditions.

Stage 3 & 7: KHUWAISAT 12.4 km — Thursday, March 16

The first car will start this stage at 3:29pm, and again at 7:46pm.

This stage travels along one side of the Kuwait Bay, near the Salmiya Road, and is the longest in the first leg. Most of the going is straightforward, but there are one or two bumps that could take cars by surprise. Again the surface of the middle section could be muddy, if there is rain, or a high tide, or, if the weather leading up to the event is hot, it could be very sandy. The start and finish of the stage are fast.

Stage 4 & 8: MUTLA 9.17 km — Thursday, March 16

The first car will start this stage at 10:06 am, and again at 11:25 am and 3:04pm.

This is a fast stage with a number of hairpins. It is also one of the longest of the rally, and must be driven three times. This suggests that the more powerful cars will be able to take some time here.

Stage 10, 13 & 16: SULAIBIYA 12.58 km — Friday, March 17

The first car will start this stage at 10:06 am, and again at 11:56 am and 3:37pm.

This is another twisty quarry stage which has never been used before. The stage is expected to test driving skills, and should be an interesting one to watch.

Sporty image for Suzuki

SWIFT — the provocative new car from Suzuki.

AT FIRST, it is the small things that catch your attention — the curve of a fender, the low, purposeful hood, the windshield, windows and headlights that blend smoothly into the body work.

Each detail complements the next, flowing together harmoniously into a superbly unified statement of automotive art: responsive, efficient, elegant in its simplicity.

The unobstructed forward vision afforded by the low, rounded instrument panel visually expands the interior.

The glare-free instrument module falls naturally into the driver's line of sight, while switches for lights, indicators, and wipers are set within easy reach.

Suzuki's heating/air-conditioning system ensures complete cabin comfort in any kind of weather, with outlets positioned for optimum directional flow.

The roomy interior offers passengers ample leg space and headroom. The body-contoured front seats provide excellent support, as well as generous front-to-rear adjustment and fully reclining seat backs. Tilt steering is available on GLX and GTI.

The rear seats are sculpted for maximum support and legroom, with seat backs that fold down in seconds, singly or together, to create a variety of passenger and cargo combinations.

The economical 1.0/OHC engine features Direct Acting Valve Train (DAVT) and Hydraulic Lash Adjusters (HLA) to minimize maintenance and sharpen overall performance.

The Swift is also available with a 1.3/OHC engine. Whichever you choose, Suzuki's full transistor ignition and free-flowing manifold design ensure sharp response and superior fuel economy.

4-wheel independent strut suspension soaks up the bumps and provides sure-footed handling even on twisty back roads. Radial tyres are standard equipment, as are dependable front disk brakes.

Monocoque construction techniques make the body light and exceptionally strong. Designed by computer, it improves fuel economy, reduces wind noise, and improves high-speed stability.

The 1.3/twin-cam 16-valve engine of the Swift GTI has 4 valves per cylinder with Hydraulic Lash Adjusters (HLA), Electronic Spark Advance (ESA) and multi-point injection. Front and rear stabilizers, 14" low-profile radial tyres and 4-wheel disc brakes promise exceptional road-holding. Super sports bucket seats, shift lever and steering wheel, analogue instruments, and molded door and rear quarter trim complete the GTI's sporty image.



GOVERNMENT WARNING: SMOKING IS A MAIN CAUSE OF LUNG CANCER AND DISEASES OF THE LUNGS, HEART AND ARTERIES.

**10TH KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL RALLY:
AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT**

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, MARCH 16-17, 1989

A great deal of change — not necessarily for the good

Longest season ever for KTMSD

Gail Seery reviews the 1988/89 Kuwait rally season

THE 1988/89 season has been the longest and most confusing season to date. The idea behind converting to one extra long season running from January 1988 to April 1989 was that this would facilitate a change-over from a January to December season with a long summer break, to a September to April season with no break.

However drivers found that their sponsors did not like this form of budgeting and after a very long season the club will have a short, three event season, ending in December before changing back to the old way of doing things.

To confuse matters, there is no straightforward scoring method for points this season. True, points are awarded as detailed in the tables elsewhere in this supplement, but drivers will have to drop one result out of the local rallies, must participate in one international, and must drop one of the international results.

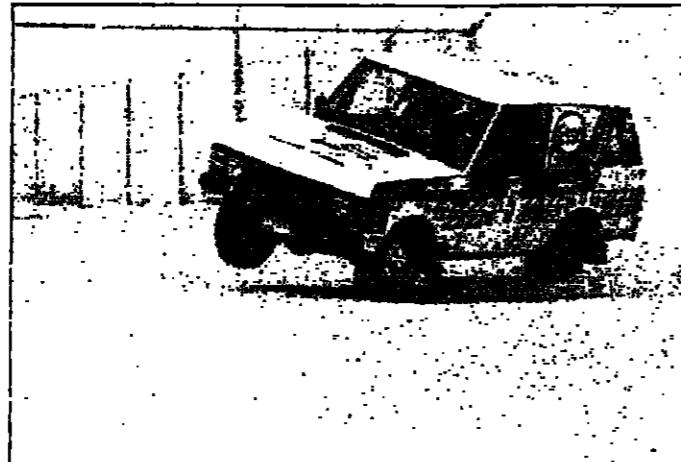
Extra weighting is given to the international results, and the points are doubled. It is therefore not so easy to calculate exactly how far apart the drivers stand.

Leads

Eid Falah currently leads the Kuwait National Championship, after driving his best season to date, in the Zayani Range Rover.

This young driver had never won an event until April of 1988, but with a strong car, and an experienced and sensible co-driver he has notched up a series of good wins.

Second place is held by one of Kuwait's most experienced campaigners, Tareq Al Wazzan, driving for Marlboro. He has had a truly disastrous season, and has



Eid Falah: defying the odds



The drivers wait for the results of round 6.



Mohammed Jasar & Fadi Mansur stuck in the mud at round 5

Entered in no less than three other.

Ahmed Al Zafiri and Mohammed Al Husseini have both had a poor season. Zafiri managed to finish only twice — and even then one of the results was overturned. Apart from the apparently indestructible Daihatsu Charade, every other vehicle he has entered has collapsed sooner or later. Both he and Husseini have been hit a chronic lack of spares for the ageing Toyota Celicas. If both these drivers are back in competitive cars next season we should witness a good fight.

Competent

Both Ali Al Birami and Ahmed Al Nasser have driven competently throughout the season, but have never really questioned the domination of the more powerful cars ahead of them.

Tareq Al Alyan managed to notch up some top five finishes and at one point led the championship, but because of the scoring system described above, his high placings have been deceptive, and the return of the more powerful cars has seen his results progressively worsening.

Lester Featherstonehaugh took his Volvo home to fifth place in December's rally — his first finish for a number of years, and one which gives a hint of what this driver is

capable of.

Josef Miskulinig and Klaus Schwingenholz did well in the early rounds, coming home first out of the local entrants in the 1988 International. However, business commitments forced this pairing out of local events.

Otmar Lange failed to drive in any round to date, and his comeback for the international is eagerly awaited. He co-drove for Michel Saleh in last year's international.

The season has seen a great deal of change, not all of it necessarily for the good. At the start of the 1988 the organisation changed its name to KTMSD, and produced a new logo — but this change only scraped the surface. The

most disturbing aspect has been that there have been no fewer than four Clerks of the Course this season, displaying various levels of expertise. Richard Bondi, the current incumbent is settling into his tasks well.

The KT Club has taken the very positive step of appointing Abdullah Barkawi to work on rallies full time, and he and secretary Debbie Hayes have worked hard to create a club environment in their offices.

The 10th Kuwait International Rally sponsored by the Mahdi Habib Establishment will be the organising committee's biggest venture to date and we wish them every success and our continued support.

Kuwait International Rally Results

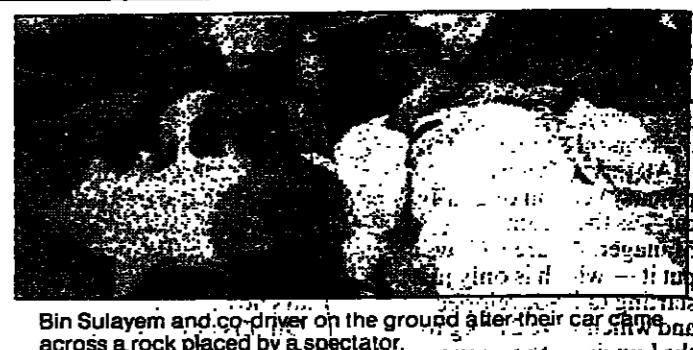
	1st	2nd	3rd	
1978	Bill Murphy	Tareq Al Wazzan	Gerard Asfar	Volvo 242 BMW 320i Renault 16
1979	Harry Kalstrom	Shekhar Mehta	Jean Ragnotti	Datsun 160J Datsun 160J Renault 5
1980	Shekhar Mehta	Harry Kalstrom	Mike Fosse	Datsun 160J Datsun 160J Toyota Celica
1981	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Ali Al Birami	Faez Chihab	Datsun 160J Datsun 160J Nissan Patrol
1983	Saeed Al Hajri	Michel Saleh	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Opel Ascona 400 Toyota Celica Datsun 160J
1984	Michel Saleh	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Ali Al Birami	Toyota Celica Nissan 240RS Datsun 160J
1985	Mohammed Bin Sulayem	Ottmar Lange	Ahmed Al Nasser	Toyota Celica Turbo Nissan 240RS Mitsubishi Sapporo
1987	Saeed Al Hajri	Mohammed Bin Sulayem	Lasse Lampi	Porsche 911 SCRS Toyota Celica Turbo Mitsubishi Starion
1988	Mohammed Bin Sulayem	Saeed Al Hajri	Sultan Al Sowaidi	Toyota Celica Turbo Audi Quattro A2 Toyota Celica

Qatar rally upsetting

THE Qatar Rally was undoubtedly one of the most upsetting for a long time. What should have been an event decided on the performance of the drivers and on the power and reliability of their new group A cars, became settled instead by spectator intervention.

The rally was doomed to be cut short on both legs, because the organisers could not control a handful of onlookers who seemed determined to make trouble.

It was near to the end of the second leg when Sulayem came over a bank, braked and landed on a rock which had been placed there between Al Hajri passing and Sulayem's arrival. The organisers stopped the rally at the



Bin Sulayem and co-driver on the ground after their car crashed across a rock placed by a spectator.

In the first stages Al Hajri, in the Ford Sierra Cosworth, had sped away from Sulayem, but a puncture, a few stages later, cost him the lead. Sulayem was driving with a neck collar, and had very little practice time in the new Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4 prior to the rally.

Local drivers Sadona Al Kawari and Jaber Al Marri show in their attempts not to be outrun by the new group A cars, but their efforts were sadly overshadowed by events in which they had no part.

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A Galant performance in Monte Carlo

Mitsubishi Galant VR4 makes rally debut

By Andrew Cowan

ARI Vatanen and his four-wheel steering Mitsubishi VR4 made a successful debut in the Monte Carlo Rally, which motorsport purists consider to be the "classic" event in the World Rally Championship. These "purists" are the admirers of superb machines and also fans of exciting, hard-fought races who gather in their thousands during four days and four nights all along the route.

The success of this debut in the Monte Carlo Rally can be summed up in a few figures: a fastest overall time on tarmac on which it was the Galant's first experience, a third place overall held throughout ten special stages out of the twenty in which the "coupe" Vatanen-Mitsubishi competed before they went off the road only four events and four hours away from the finish in the Principality.

All this with a car — a primary version of a rally car", as the Team Manager, Andrew Cowan put it — which is only just starting to be developed, and which gave 210 kg to the Lancia of the winner, Massimo Biasion, the final Italian in this year's overall. Ari Vatanen's words were:

"We have achieved a result which I am very pleased with, especially the third place, especially the third place, which is not bad at all, given the fact that we have been racing for only a few years now."

On this point Cesare Fiorio, the Manager of the sporting departments of the Italian Group said that it is

"...a great achievement for Ari Vatanen. Bruno Saby has been

very good in the last few years, and he has been

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MARLBORO'S Tareq Al Wazzan, who now lies second in the Kuwait National Championship, is an extremely experienced and able competitor. He began motorsports in 1973, competing in the Autotests which were held at the Qadsia Club.

"In my first event I drove an Alfa Romeo and came fifth," he recalls. "Before that I had only driven in the street, and as I drove an Alfa Romeo anyway I was approached by that company to drive their car in the Autotest." Very few drivers are lucky enough to be sponsored from their first event.

Negotiate

Entrants had to negotiate their path through a series of bollards — and of course, it is here that the real driving skill lies. "Right from the start I loved racing, cars and speed, but it isn't legal to race in the street. When they came to me and told me I could race other cars legally I jumped at the chance."

Although this is the KT Club's 10th rally, rallying actually started here in 1975 organised by ex-World Champion navigator David Richards. "I drove a Porsche-shaped Volkswagen SB2 and came 6th overall. Then I was sponsored by BMW and drove a BMW 2002. I took second place overall and was the first Kuwaiti home in 1976."

"The following year I was still with BMW, but this time I broke. Really, this is not the 10th International — we were rallying before 1978. My first international event was Qatar in 1977."

"The KT Club sports association started when Ahmed Al Hejail and I went to Mr Al Monayes and asked if we could start a sporting section to the club. We wanted the opportunity to put Kuwait ahead and make it special. He agreed, and the first international they organised was won by Bill Murphy."

Wazzan was in the second car home — still a BMW, but this time a BMW 320i. "Once again I was first among the Kuwaitis." Wazzan was also the first Gulf entrant in the Gulf Championship, and his prize, from Rothmans and Castrol, was the opportunity to drive the Burmah Rally in Scotland.

"That was a completely new experience for me. There were 90 starters, and I finished number 32. It was the first rally in my life when I saw forests and mountains — it was raining solid for three days, and the roads were really slippery — not exactly like the desert!"

"John Spiller, who later went on to partner Saeed and Mohammed was my co-driver at that time. I didn't really know what to expect, and my desert rallying experience didn't help me at all. We did the first two hundred metres, then took a 90 right, and landed the car, an Opel Kadett GTE, in a ditch."

Experience

"Looking back I can see that it was a mistake to take me there. It was tarmac of course, which I'd never encountered, and I'd never had to drive solid for three days. It was too much too soon, and I had no special training for the event."

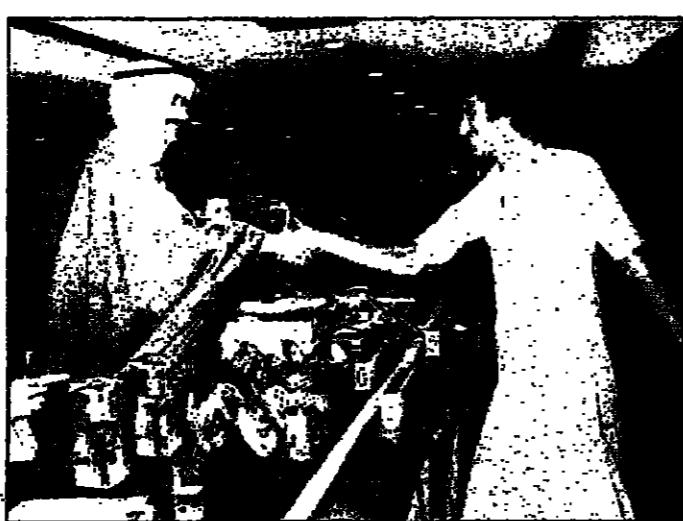
"I enjoyed it as an experience, and it was good practice for me, but I can't say it helped me in the desert. On the other hand, it was very good experience to be among such good drivers, and I learned a good deal about that

Gail Seery talks to one of Kuwait's leading drivers

Al Wazzan: I can't really see myself stopping



Al Wazzan has driven a bewildering array of cars. (above and below).



Al Wazzan has received quite a few prizes in his career.

Type of rally.

"By this time my name was getting quite well known — remember that Saeed and Mohammed had not even started at this time. I rallied in Cyprus twice, and thoroughly enjoyed it, although this rally is again, quite different from anything we have here. The overall speed of the event is very slow — I believe it's actually one of the slowest events in the world. Of course I was also rallying in the other Gulf countries like Qatar and Bahrain."

"In 1980 I won the Kuwait National Championship, and in 1981 I won the Dubai International Rally. Then I stopped rallying for three or four years."

"To be honest, I thought I'd stopped for good. Then one day in February 1987 I was driving my Renault Five turbo, and stopped to watch — it was the rally which Ottmar won and Eid came second in. It was so exciting that I wanted to get back into the driving seat myself."

"I'd had a number of sponsors over the years, but I felt I had strongest ties with Marlboro, and they sponsored

me from my comeback until now. At the moment, now that Mohammed Bin Sulayem has moved on, I'm their number one driver in the Middle East."

Changed

"However, things changed while I was away from the sport. When I finished I was the top driver, but big sponsorship had not yet come here. When I was rallying before there was no-one driving with the level of commitment and investment of the big teams. In fact, what I found was that it was not possible to compete with Mohammed and Saeed as a private entrant. This fact has disillusioned many drivers over the years, but if it will ever be possible for an ordinary driver to beat one of them it will happen this year, while we can still drive Group B cars, which can match their cars in terms of power."

"Once I decided to make my comeback I travelled to Scotland and bought a Toyota Celica that had belonged to Per Ekland. I wanted to drive in the 1987 international, but the car was delayed coming



Al Wazzan with his new Opel Manta and in action. (Inset).



Al Wazzan and Ahmed Al Hejail.



Al Wazzan and Alain Prost in Hungary.

'No one can win a rally on their own, no matter how good a car is. A driver is nothing without a good co-driver beside him. Khaled Khalifa is one of the best in the business, and I'm delighted to have him working with me. Our team is controlled by Toni Samia, another very experienced campaigner, who used to co-drive for me, and for Michel Saleh. We have the advantage of a good sponsor, Marlboro, and I look forward to very many more years rallying — I can't really see myself stopping.'

through customs, and I eventually made my comeback in the night rally."

"At that time I thought it

was the toughest of my career — I had always been at the top before, and I was frightened of finding my skill was gone."



Al Wazzan with Michel Saleh and John Spiller.

Wazzan needn't have worried. By the time he got to the end of the first stage he had caught

three cars and taken the fastest time. From there on, despite being slowed considerably by

the cars ahead of him and the dust they were throwing up, Wazzan was ahead, and was the rally.

Since then he has not finished a local event lower than second — and he settles for second only when a problem robs him of first place. Sadly however, there have been many problems. This season would have been settled much earlier if he hadn't broken in three events. Much of the time the problem was frustratingly straightforward — as when he encountered mysterious electrical problems with his Range Rover, which his service team couldn't diagnose or fix — until after the rally.

"Marlboro are the biggest motorsports sponsor in the World, and I'm proud to be a member of the team," says Wazzan.

In 1987 his sponsors took him to Hungary Grand Prix where he was introduced to Marlboro team-mate, former world champion, and the man who has won more races than any one else, Alain Prost.

"This was nothing to do with rallying," said Wazzan, "but it was a great experience."

Wazzan has also participated in the Marlboro Desert Challenge series of 4x4 rallies, and has invariably done well. For the 1987 and 88 rallies he drove under Arab Times sponsorship and his links with the paper are strong. "It's the best rally paper," he says. He lies third in this year's Challenge after one event, and will be driving a works prepared and backed Mitsubishi Sonauto for the remaining events. The car will bear the distinctive Marlboro colours.

Wazzan's main concern now is the International. "This rally is another important event for me. If I can manage to be the first Kuwaiti home I will take the lead in the championship. You have to bear in mind that if Eid and I drop our worst results, as we have to before the end of the season, then I am only seven points behind him. If I hadn't had those electrical problems with the Range Rover I'd be in the lead now. Even so, I started way back, climbed to seventh, then fourth, and am now second. The championship title is within my grasp."

Wazzan has raced and rallied in a bewildering array of cars, from the Alfa Romeo, to the Mini, to BMW, and Toyota. Now he will be driving the Opel Manta 400, which formerly belonged to Ahmed Khalifa of Dubai, in which he took the Dubai Championship last year.

"I don't think I've pushed this car yet. It's already given me first and second places, and I think it is capable of a very good result. The Manta is tried and tested, and has already proved itself to be strong and reliable — at all levels, including World Championship. It's in good hands with Afghanistan, the OPEL dealers for Kuwait."

"No-one can win a rally on their own, no matter how good a car is. A driver is nothing without a good co-driver beside him. Khaled Khalifa is one of the best in the business, and I'm delighted to have him working with me. Our team is controlled by Toni Samia, another very experienced campaigner, who used to co-drive for me, and for Michel Saleh. We have the advantage of a good sponsor, Marlboro, and I look forward to very many more years rallying — I can't really see myself stopping."



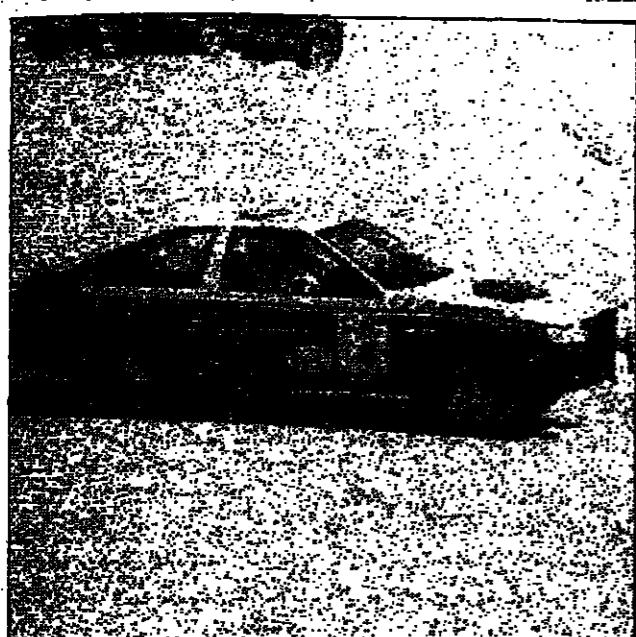
Mr. Fukuda, the Japanese car expert arrived yesterday from Tokyo to attend the preparations for the big event by Abbas Ahmad Al-Shawaf & Bros. Co.

Tomorrow Mr. Fukuda will reveal the good news with a pleasant surprise for the distinctive driving lovers.

الجدة اسعار

10TH KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL RALLY:
AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, MARCH 16-17, 1989



SULAYEM has made a dramatic impact on rally sport in the Middle East region over the last six years. He has won the Middle East Championship for three years running, though last year it looked as though he would be unable to make the hat-trick. He sustained a severe neck injury in a road accident in October, and was unable to drive in Oman. Despite being hampered by a very solid looking neck brace in Dubai, he took a win and the Championship laurels again.

Sulayem made his debut in the Dubai International in 1983, and surprised onlookers by coming second. Since then he has shown himself to be one of the most persistent and determined racers in the sport.

For many years the Dubian had to struggle on in the shadow of Al Hajri, and there were those who said that his 1986 Championship title was made more accessible by the non-participation of Al Hajri. However, two more titles followed, and his prowess as a driver can no longer be in any doubt.

Sulayem has driven for the Toyota Team Middle East for a number of years. This year his old Toyota Celica Twincam Turbo is relegated to practice car as the new rules enforced by FISA state that as a B-seeded driver, Sulayem must compete in a Group A car. The Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4 should prove a competitive car, and will be seeded number 1 for this rally.

Sulayem has also in the past been strongly identified with Marlboro. This link is now broken, and he now rallies under Marlboro sponsorship.

Saeed Al Hajri

Saeed Al Hajri is one of the most experienced and gifted drivers currently rallying in the Middle East. He was the first Arab driver to gain points at World Championship level, and took an impressive 4th place in the 1986 World Championship Acropolis Rally.

The Qatari started rallying in 1978, and joined Rothmans in



1982. He was Gulf Champion from 1982 to 1984, and then won the newly formed FISA Middle East Championship in 1984 and 1985. In 1986 he took a break from the region's rallies to compete at European and World Championship level, but returned in 1987.

Between 1983 and 1986 he notched some impressive international results, including 2nd place in the Galway Rally — his first event on tarmac, and a win in the Pharaohs rally in 1985.

Al Hajri has suffered more than his fair share of bad luck over the last two years. His Porsche 911SCRS, probably the most photogenic rally car of all time, was retired, and 1988 saw him rallying in an Audi Quattro A2. This was dogged by bad luck and freak mechanical and electrical problems, and he did not win any rally that year. However, he was awarded a win in the recent Qatar Rally, and will be out for success in his new Rothmans Ford Sierra Cosworth, seeded number 2.

Abbas Al Mousawi

Al Mousawi is one of Qatar's most talented drivers, but despite solid backing from Merch, was unable to match the professional teams in terms of car and team support until recently. He took his first international win in the 1987 Marlboro Desert Challenge round in Bahrain, and was rewarded with a works prepared Mitsubishi Pajero for the 1988 series, which included two Middle East Championship internationals.

Here he quickly established a solid reputation with a win in Bahrain. In the Oman International he drove the Pajero into third place, behind Waldegard and Ahmed Khalifa. He went on to the final in Dubai, and won the 1988 Marlboro Desert Challenge without much apparent difficulty.

This season saw him in first place in the Muscat round of the 1989 4x4 series. He is also driving a Group N Mitsubishi Galant 4wd in the Middle East Championship rounds, and has added Emirates Airlines to his list of sponsors. He is seeded number 7 for this event.

Ron Oakley

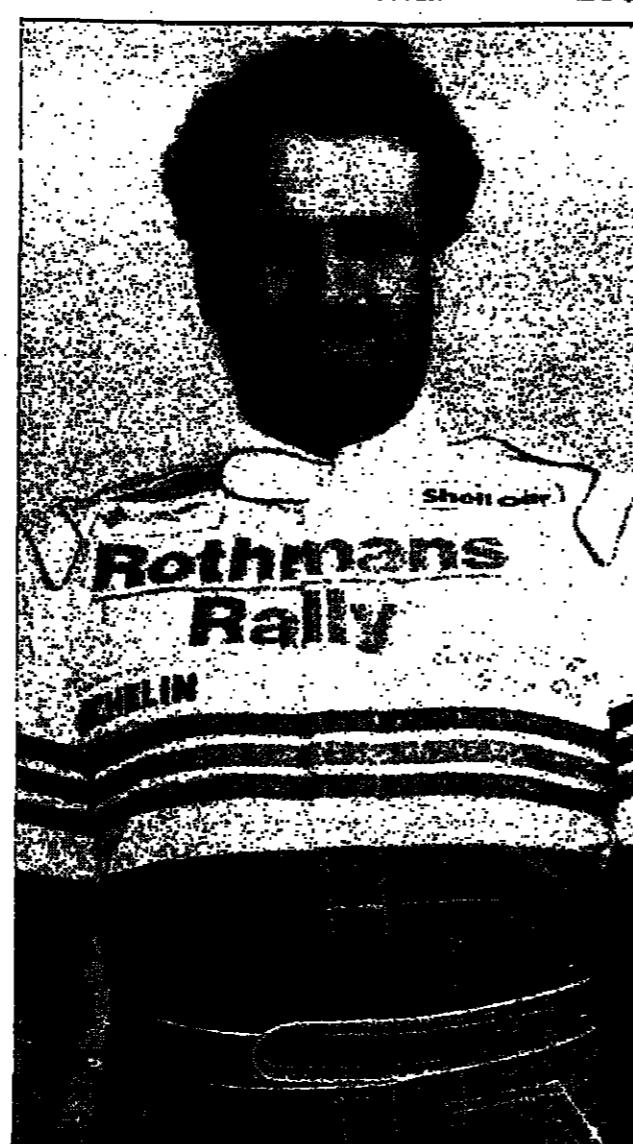
Oakley, driving the Subaru RX turbo is a newcomer to the Middle East Championship series. He drove in Qatar last month, but retired on the first leg. He is seeded number 4, because, according to FISA rules, Group A cars start first, then Group N, and then Group B and S.

Sadeeq Al Kuwari

Kuwari is from Qatar and drives an Opel Manta 400, one of the more powerful cars in the event. He drove in the recent Qatar International rally, and did well to come third. He has a solid base of experience, and will be hoping for a good result in Kuwait, although there will be more powerful cars here than in

Profiles of leading drivers, co-drivers

International



Saeed Al Hajri

Local entrants



Tareq Al Wazzan

Co-drivers



Lester Featherstonehaugh

Lester is one of the most popular drivers in Kuwait, mostly famous for driving a Volvo, and for not finishing. He came fifth in a local event however, despite having comparatively low power, and it is clear that good results are well within his grasp. In this rally he drives his new Lada and it will be interesting to see how he, and co-driver Edgar Speak perform. The pair are seeded number 27.

Ahmed Al Mulla

Ahmed Al Mulla is Kuwait's leading newcomer. Driving the Nissan 240RS in his first season he has consistently placed top five finishes. This will be his first international at the wheel of the Nissan, and we wish him luck. His start number is 11.

Co-drivers

No driver can do well without a good co-driver. It is impossible to profile all co-drivers, but here is some information about the leading co-drivers.

Ronan Morgan

Ronan Morgan has been rallying in the Gulf since 1986 and now partners Mohammed Bin Sulayem. He has had a great deal of experience over the years, and has also partnered Tony Pond, Mark Lovell, Russell Brooks and Billy Coleman. Before joining Sulayem, Morgan co-drove for Saeed Al Hajri.

Steve Bond

Bond, who navigates for Al Hajri is another experienced campaigner with a great deal of experience in European events. He joined Al Hajri in Qatar in 1988.

Khaled Khalifa

Khalifa partners Tareq Al Wazzan, and has also co-driven for Michel Saleh, Eid Falah and Ahmed Al Helal. Khalifa is under contract to Marlboro, and has wide international experience.



Mohammed Bin Sulayem

Fahad Al Rashed

Fahad Al Rashed co-drives for Ahmed Al Helal, and is the current Kuwait Navigation Champion.

Sadeq Ashkanani

Ashkanani is a former navigator's champion, and has partnered many of the best Arab drivers, notably Mohammed Bin Sulayem, and was with Al Zafiri when he took first place in the 1982 Kuwait International Rally. His current partner is Eid Falah, a relatively inexperienced driver, who benefits from Ashkanani's strong and broad experience. Falah has taken his best results with Ashkanani as his co-driver.



Mohammed Al Hussein

Dominique Bondi

Dominique Bondi is Kuwait's first lady rally driver for a number of years. She drives a Lada Nova with Lacoste sponsorship, and has done well in her first two rallies. This is her first international event, and she will be seeded number 29. Isabelle Sperando is her co-driver for this event.

Ali Al Birami

Ali Al Birami will be driving the tiny Daihatsu Charade which twice won the Kuwait National Championship. Although not a winner, this car is very reliable, and Birami has notched up respectable results in it.

Birami himself is a highly experienced driver, and has entered a staggering 50 or so rallies over a thirteen year period. His car will bear the number 15.

Tareq Al Alyan

Alyan is seeded number 20 for this event, but is likely to finish higher. His Daihatsu Rocky is the loudest vehicle in the event, and his steady driving usually brings results. However if he is to hold any hope of fulfilling his aim of winning the Kuwait National championship, he has to be among the first Kuwait entrants home. Alyan is a former Marlboro Desert Challenge Champion.

No.	Entrant	Driver	Co-Driver	Nat	Car	Group
1	Winston Toyota Team	Mohammed Bin Sulayem	Roman Morgan	UAE/GB	Toyota Celica GT4	A
2	Rothmans Ford Team	Saeed Al Hajri	Steve Bond	QTR/QTR	Ford Sierra RS Cosworth	A
3		Ahmed Al Helal	Fahad Al Rashed	KWT/KWT	Toyota Corolla GT	A
4		Ron Oakley	David Newbury	UAE/UAE	Subaru RX Turbo	A
5		Ahmed Al Nasser	Bader Al Zaidi	KWT/KWT	Mitsubishi Starion Turbo	A
6	Mahdi Habib Est	Jeffrey McKesson	Steve Johnson	KWT/KWT	Mitsubishi Colt	A
7	Team Rallijart ME	Abbas Al Mousawi	Julian Raymond	QTR/QTR	Mitsubishi Galant VR4	N
8		Tareq Al Wazzan	Khalid Khalifa	KWT/KWT	Opel Manta 400	B
9		Ortmar Lange	Ulrich Angerer	KWT/KWT	Nissan 240RS	B
10		Sultan Al Sowaidi	David Orrix	QTR/QTR	Toyota Celica Turbo	B
11		Ahmed Al Mulla	Ibrahim Al Mousawi	KWT/KWT	Nissan 240RS	B
12		Sameer Al Husseini	Mohammed Ali	QTR/QTR	Nissan 240RS	B
13		Saadoon Al Kawari	A. Wahid Al Haye	KWT/KWT	Opel Manta 400	B
14		Ali Al Birami	Mohammed Al Zaidi	KWT/KWT	Daihatsu Charade	S
15	Habib & Zayani Team	Mohammed Al Husseini	Habib Macky	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
16	Winston W.G. Towell	Ahmed Al Zafiri	Ghazi Al Zafiri	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
17		Jaber Al Marry	Hamed Al Marry	QTR/QTR	Range Rover	S
18	Habib & Zayani Team	Eid Falah	Sadeq Ashkanani	KWT/KWT	Daihatsu Rocky	S
19		Tareq Al Alyan	Khalil Ali	KWT/KWT	Lada Saloon	S
20	Mahdi Habib Est	Younis Ali	Orthman Hamder	KWT/KWT	Hyundai Pony	S
21		Khamees Al Khamees	Abdulatif Al Ajram	KWT/KWT	Datsun Silvia	S
22		Naser Al Musallam	Mufeed Ali	KWT/KWT	Mitsubishi Starion	S
23	Mahdi Habib Est	Abdullah Al Shuhaisei	Mahmoud Bakch	KWT/KWT	Datsun 160J	S
24	Adel Al Marzouk Est	Ahmed Al Mousawi	Ahmed Al Baqshi	KWT/KWT	Lada Saloon	S
25		Saad Al Shammary	Ahmed Al Edreesi	KWT/KWT	Suzuki GTI 16V	S
26		Lester Featherstonehaugh	Kenneth Speak	KWT/KWT	Lada Niva	S
27		Adel Al Gharem	Abdullah Hallak	KWT/KWT	Mitsubishi Lancer Turbo	S
28		Dominique Rondi	Isabelle Spandrid	KWT/KWT	Datsun Silvia	S
29	Lacoste	Mumtaz Shah	Margari Callow	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
30		Hasan Karki	Doukhi Al Doukhi	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
31		Abdulrazaq Al Khamees	Fandi Al Rashidi	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
32		Adel Samara	Ghassan Owejan	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
33		Hussein Karki	Adnan Abdulsalam	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
34		Saleh Al Ali	Saoud Al Mutairi	KWT/KWT	Toyota	S
35		Anwar Abu Jarwa	Salam Fawaz	KWT/KWT	Toyota Landcruiser	S
36		Waled Al Methen	Mohd Al Methen	KWT/KWT	Porsche 924	S
37		Ajmad Qutaineh	Majdi Mousa	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
38		Andre Sourjyan	Sarkis Sourjyan	KWT/KWT	Toyota Corolla GT	S
39		Khalid Al Rayes	Abdulatif Al Omari	KWT/KWT	Datsun 20MX	S
40	Adel Al Marzouk Est	Wahby Al Roodez	Khalil A. Khazal	KWT/KWT	Toyota Celica	S
41						

Co-drivers championship standings

CO-DRIVER	RND 1	RND 2	RND 3	RND 4	RND 5	RND 6	RND 7	TOTAL
Sadeq Ashkanani	2	16	24	19	24	4	24	= 113
Khaled Khalifa	19	4	2	24	2	24	19	= 94
Fahad Al Rashed	24	4	2	16	0	19	2	= 67

Driver's championship standings

DRIVER	RND 1	RND 2	RND 3	RND 4	RND 5	RND 6	RND 7	TOTAL
Eid Falah	2	16	24	19	24	4	24	= 113
Tareq Al Wazzan	19	4	2	24	2	24	19	=

EVENTS

ARTS

Ghadir Gallery

UNTIL March 19: Recent paintings by British water colour artist Patricia Mills will be shown at the Ghadir Gallery, Salhiya Complex, mezzanine, Gate 5, daily from 9 am to 12 noon and 4 to 8.30 pm.

Sultan Gallery

AN exhibition of paintings by Bangladeshi artist Mounirul Islam is open at the gallery, Thunayan Al Ghaniyah Bldg., Al Soor St., daily except Friday from 9 am to 12 noon and 5 to 8 pm.

Kuwait Science Museum

OPEN Saturday - Wednesday, 4.30 - 5.30 pm only. Natural history exhibits from in and around Kuwait, including blue whale. Closed on Thursday and Friday.

Islamic Arts Museum

SAT. - Thurs.: 8.30 am to 12.30 pm and 4.30 to 7.30 pm. Collection includes rare Islamic artefacts, Quranic manuscripts; ceramics, carpets and marine equipment. Arabian Gulf St.

Taqq Rajab Museum

SAT. - Thurs.: 9 am to 12 noon; 4 to 7 pm; Fridays: 9 am to noon. Collection of Islamic arts, costumes and jewellery from the Muslim world.

Sadu House

SAT. - Thurs.: 9 am to 12 noon; 4 to 7 pm. Exhibits include bedouin handicrafts—rugs, saddle bags, cushions and textiles. Closed on Friday.

CINEMA

British Council

MARCH 18/19 (6.30 pm): A feature film Brazil will be shown at the British Council. When Sam Lowry first sees Jill Layton he does not realize the complications she will bring into his life. A spoof on George Orwell's 1984, this film won the Bafta Award. Admission is free but it is advisable to reserve seats. Tel: 2515512, 2533204.

MUSIC

Children's Dance Recital

MARCH 21/22 (6 pm): Steps School of Ballet will present a children's dance recital in the theatre of the Kuwait English School, Salwa. Tickets, KD2, are available at KES from 5 to 7 pm on weekdays. Tel: 5629356 ext 55 (pm only) or 5616228.

Beat Concert

MARCH 31: Vishal Arts

ENTERTAINMENT

Jukebox returns in May

THIRTY years of music, from 1950s to 1980s, will be featured in the musical Jukebox 5, which returns in May. Sounds Great producer/director Ken Winston, a well-known person in amateur/theatre circles, said the show will be held on May 23, 24 and 25 at Salmiya Cinema.

Jukebox, which was performed from 1984-87, was cancelled last year. Now, Ken has decided to bring back the show. June Woolston and Phil Thomas, who have been involved with previous Jukebox productions, will be the musical directors.

Nasch Hamid will choreograph the show.

Auditions for singers and dancers will be held at 7 pm March 18 and 22 at Sunshine School, Salwa. "Singers must bring music, if possible, and dancers are expected to come with their dance gear," said Ken. Thrice-weekly rehearsals will start shortly.

present a beat concert featuring Symphony and Perfect Strangers from 10 am at the Sharq Co-operative Hall. At 6 pm the group will present a variety show with Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi music and folk dances. For details call Anthony D'Souza or Arjun Gehi. Tel: 2631826 or 2663693.

THEATRE

Malayalam Drama

APRIL 7: Gayathri Arts will present their first Malayalam drama "Karutha Paurnami" at Indian Arts Circle. Written by Chandra Mohan and directed by Nandan Iringalakuda. For entry passes call 5643126.

ACT

MARCH 27,28,29,30 (8 pm): ACT presents Jean Giraudoux' comic fantasy "The Madwoman of Chaillot," directed by George Plautz, at Mousetrap Theatre, Jabriya. Reduced ticket price for opening night. For reservations call 5731782 (answerphone) or 5755391, 5-7 pm.

EXHIBITION

Far East Exhibition TRADITIONAL rosewood furniture, silk and woolen carpets, decorative arts and handicrafts are on show at the exhibition at Kuwait International Hotel. Open throughout the day, until March 16.

Silk Painting Exhibition

MARCH 21-23 (5-9pm): Ladies from the German-speaking cultural association will hold a silk painting exhibition at Kuwait International Hotel, Old Failaka room. Exhibits include Arab scenes. For details ring 2423703 or 4831484.

HOTELS

At the Pullman ELYSEES Restaurant offers gourmet French meal; Al Shallal Coffee Shop features international and Arabic cuisine with live entertainment. Last date for registration is March 15.

At Kuwait International UNTIL March 16: Traditional English beefeater buffet (lunch and dinner). Steak and kidney pie, roast beef, yorkshire pudding, fish and chips, plus all trimmings.

At the SAS

BISTRONETTO: A new Italian restaurant has been opened at the hotel. A selection of Italian dishes are offered in addition to international and local specialties prepared by chef Peter D. Zobrist.

Al Boom: the floating restaurant will offer a different specialty every two days as well as the Al Boom menu of charcoal grills.

Peacock Room: offers a wide variety of Chinese cuisine introduced by Chef Von Kwee Kiong.

The Clock Drive-In restaurant serves fast foods and daily specials.

SOCIAL

Get-together and musical

MARCH 16 (8 pm): A get-together with music and dinner, will be held at Sheraton Hotel. "Bops till you Drop" music, from 1930s to 1980s, featuring Karl and Christine Anderson with the Top Ranks band. For invitations contact 3715637.

Fun Run

MARCH 21, (8 pm): Jukebox Band will hold a pre-Easter dance at Messilah Beach Hotel. Those interested in attending please contact Phil Thomas on 5387998 after 5 pm.

Community Festival

MARCH 31: 4.30 pm. Thapasya, an Indian group, will hold a community festival featuring folk dances at Maseeh Family Beach. Entrance: 500 fils (adults); 250 fils (children).

Southerners get-together

MARCH 31: The Southerners will hold a get-together at Carlton Towers Hotel from 10 am to 4 pm. Next of kin will provide musical entertainment. For details ring 2423703 or 4831484.

BA Speedbird Trophy

MARCH 24: The BA Speedbird Trophy cricket match between teams representing Britain and Pakistan will be held at the KOC New Ground, Ahmad. Play will commence at 9.30 am. All are welcome.

Volleyball Tournament

MARCH 31: The Kuwait Malaya Association will hold a volleyball tournament for Indians in connection with the Nehru Centenary celebrations. For details call Prem — 4675622 ext 293 (7 am - 3 pm).

Last date for registration is March 15.

PRAYERS

Laser Sailing

MARCH 17: Messilah Beach Laser Club's spring series will be held. Briefing at 10 am. All are welcome. For details contact David Clark — 4845171 (W); 2425947 (H); or Philip Shepherd — 4341513 (W); 5314957 (H).

FRIDAY

FRIDAY

SOUVENIRS

MARCH 17: The Southerners will hold a get-together at Carlton Towers Hotel from 10 am to 4 pm. Next of kin will provide musical entertainment. For details ring 2423703 or 4831484.

HOTELS

At the Pullman ELYSEES Restaurant offers gourmet French meal; Al Shallal Coffee Shop features international and Arabic cuisine with live entertainment.

Last date for registration is March 15.



Vinod Khanna stars in Surya

CINEMA

Al Andalus

Nigo
Starring: Steve Segal

Al Salmiya

Three Men and a Baby
Starring: Tom Selleck, Steve Guttenberg

Al Hanura

Volunteers
Starring: Tom Hanks, John Kennedy

Drive-In

Al Khademah (Arabic)

Al Firdous

Surya (Hindi)
Starring: Vinod Khanna, Bhau Priya, Raj Kumar, Amrit Puri

Fahabeel Open-Air

Shankar Dada (Hindi)

Al Fahabeel

Abjojon (Bengali)

Al Jabra

Youn Mirr Youm Helu (Arabic)

Granada

Fireback

Sulaiibkhat

Alice

Al Jeeb

August 1 (Malayalam)

Ahmed Drive-In

Mo'arakha Al Naqib

Nadia (Arabic)

FRIDAY

Al Jabra

Fleisch

Granada

Aankhen (Hindi)

Sulaiibkhat

Rat Boy

PRAYERS

Fajr

4.38 am

Zuhr

11.57

Asr

3.22 pm

Maghreb

5.58

Isha

7.14

FRIDAY

Fajr

4.35 am

Zuhr

11.56

Asr

3.23 pm

Maghreb

5.58

Isha

7.14

Deeni:

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

KTV 1

9.00 Holy Quran

9.15 Dabood Al Musiqar: cartoon serial

9.45 Tum Tek and Children

10.00 Magazine D'Actualite

10.30 Variety Show

11.00 Safar Wahid: (One Journey) cultural film.

11.35 A Time to Live: English feature film

1.00 News

1.05 World today via satellite

1.45 Songs and Music

2.30 Sports in a Week: a weekly programme focussing on local and world sports.

4.45 The Adventures of Neil: Cartoons

5.15 Liqa Al Khamis: presented by Jamil

7.00 News Summary

7.05 From People's Art

7.30 Show Jumping: local equestrian events

8.30 With Islam: hosted and presented by Dr Khalid Al Madhkur

9.00 News

10.00 Shabakat Al Teliqiyon: TV window, presented by Abdul Rahman Al Najjar

10.30 Halat Tibis: Arabic film

12.15 Akhtarna Lakum: We Present ...

1.15 News Summary

1.20 World today via satellite/ Holy Quran/ Close-down

FRIDAY

9.00 Holy Quran

9.15 Cartoons

9.45 Children's Magazine followed by songs and music

10.15 Faiez Al Tush: Arabic serial, starring: Ghanem Al Slaiti, Abdul Aziz Jassem.

11.00 Adhath Maudua

11.15 Friday prayer and Friday sermon

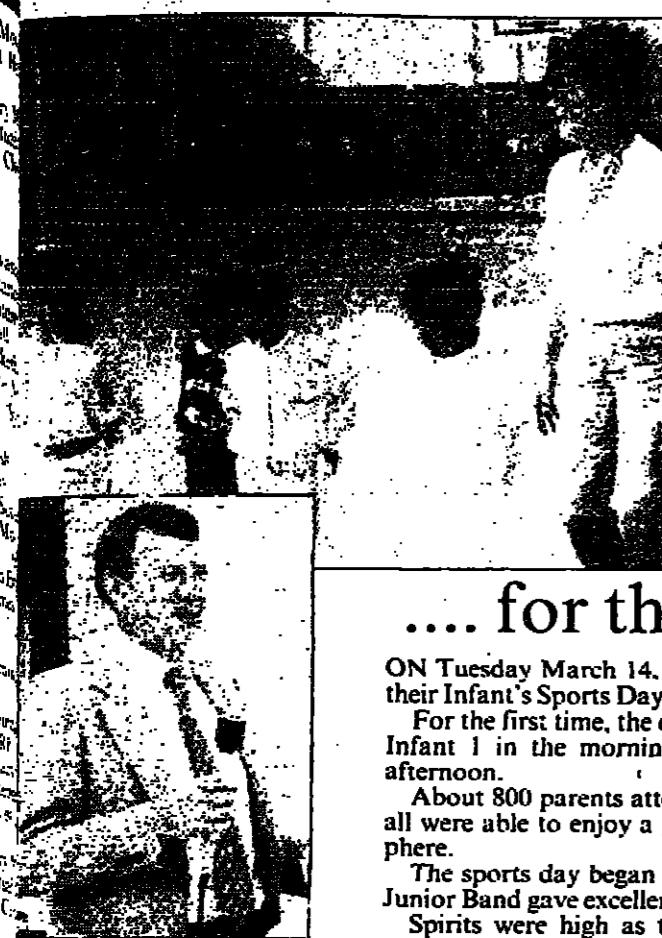
12.30 Alwan

1.00 News

1.05 World today via satellite

1.35 Varieties

The New English School



.... for the first time

ON Tuesday March 14, The New English School held their Infant's Sports Day.

For the first time, the event was divided into KG and Infant 1 in the morning and Infant 2 and 3 in the afternoon.

About 800 parents attended throughout the day and all were able to enjoy a good view and relaxed atmosphere.

The sports day began with a Grand Parade, and the Junior Band gave excellent performances.

Spirits were high as the children participated in a greater number of events than ever before.



The American School Kuwait

ASK's infants enjoy sports

THIS week, the weather was just right for sports days. It was bright, but not sunny, with a gentle breeze and no humidity. The American School Kuwait was in luck. On Monday March 13th, Tuesday March 14th and Wednesday March 15th it held three sports days.

The first two sports days were held at the school premises, while the last took place at the Arabic club. I was lucky to be invited to all three!

Monday and Tuesday were dedicated to the kindergarten classes, and grades one and two respectively.

These classes were divided into four colour coded teams: red, yellow, blue and green. On Monday, the KG classes were further divided into two groups, a group to participate at 8:00am and another at 12:15pm.

The children arrived bright and early, very excited about the events.

They were not at all worried about losing and were looking forward to participating.

Each child was identified as being a member of a specific team by a shiny coloured band (of the same four colours) stuck onto his T-shirt. If a child was distracted and thereby lost track of where his team went, all he had to do was look for the pole which held the same coloured straw as his team.

Each team started off with a different race and rotated around the courtyard moving to the next race whenever the team finished. The winners were chosen with respect to the least average time the team took in all the races. That is, each team participated and was timed for each race. After completing all the races, the team with the minimum time score won first place.

The teams were given great support by teachers, parents, elder students and younger brothers and sisters. Students of the older classes acted as cheerleaders!

Basically, there were seven different races. Putting water into a bucket, running through a yard full of obstacles, throwing a ball into a loop, throwing small loops into a larger loop, running across the yard and back, sack race, and standing in a circle and throwing the ball to each individual in that circle.

The hectic pace of events concluded with a tug-of-war. For this, two teams had to unite to form a larger team, for instance, green and blue against red and yellow.

Apparently, this was a very popular game and the children continued to pull and pull when the "war" ended. This encouraged the teachers to join in and they set up a "teachers vs kindergartens" war, and guess who won? The little children!

I suppose after the teachers saw all the fun their students were having, they could not resist having some fun of their own. They had a wet-balloon toss. Some of the teachers got soaked to the skin!

The days ended with extremely tired youngsters waiting patiently for their parents to take them home. I'm sure all they wanted was a warm bath and a snug bed.



Sisterly support



Into the bucket

Get set ..



Keep your head down



Fun, fun, fun

We regret that we did not put in all the pictures we have taken, however, if any of you were expecting your picture to go down and it did not, keep in tune ... there's always Tuesday!

Dear Junior readers,

AS some of you probably know by now, I have visited a number of schools to keep up with the various activities that are taking place.

I thank the respective schools for their co-operation and hospitality and am amazed at the great number of activities that are currently being undertaken. I hope all of you will contribute to the

JUNIOR TIMES describing the activities you are involved in at school. Tell your fellow readers about the great things you do!

Don't forget to put your name, school, scholastic year, photograph and your telephone number (so I can tell you when your work will be published). And watch out, your school may be the next to be attacked by the media.

Manal



Waiting



Where are your feet?



From the bucket

Apparently our Haute Cuisine wasn't Haute enough for some of our passengers.



When we found that children weren't impressed with the cuisine on our long haul flights, we decided to offer them fish fingers, burgers and chips instead. With the result that as far as they're concerned, we're back in the Good Food Guide. Please contact British Airways or your nearest travel agent to reserve a special Skyflyers meal when making a reservation.

For information and reservations contact your Travel Agent or British Airways in the Mishan & Al Khatrash building, Fahad al Salam Street, Kuwait. Telephone: 2425635/6/7.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

The world's favourite airline.

ARAB TIMES Classifieds

ACCOMMODATION

Available

SALWA. House No. 196, Block 7, two large rooms with kitchen facilities for a family, bachelor or working girls to share with an Indian family. Rent KD45.50 each room. Tele. 5611243 (AT2-46425-6)

KELFAN. Area 7, House 23, close to the co-operative. Accommodation with tele. facilities for Indian family or bachelors. Close to bus route. Contact Mr. Shuaib personal. (AT2-46425-6)

SALMIYA, Amman Street near Al Rashid Hospital. Accommodation in a 2-bedroom apartment for Indian bachelors to share with bachelors. Tele. Mr. Vala 4815077 ext. 353, 8.30 am - 1 pm, 2.50 pm. (AT4-46447-3)

SALMIYA, opp. the junior Indian School, main road, Studio Al Rawai near the signal. One big room, furnished, for a vegetarian Indian bachelor. Rent KD55. Tele. Mr. Kumar, 5720870. (AT5-46483-3)

For Rent

SALMIYA, deluxe annexe CAC with double bedrooms, sitting room and kitchen. Rent KD200, electricity and water included. (AT5-46465-2)

FAITH, Talmansi Street, Block 6, House 2, near the supermarket. Rooms available for one Indian family only. Tele. 2401137. (AT4-46480-3)

KUWAIT City, Sharq, behind the Firdous Cinema near the (women) Teachers Institute. House No. 117, House for family. Tele. Mr. Ramadan 2527639, 7.30 am - 1 pm, 4-10 pm. (AT4-46448-3)

WANTED

TOYOTA Crown '82-'85 model. Tel. 372824, after 9 am. (AT4-46462-3)

Al-Naqeeb & Khattar Co. W.I.L.L.
Airfreight your personal effects ...ECONOMICALLY

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FORM ARABIA

Large quantities of second-hand furniture, carpets, curtains and electrical items available. Good prices! Tel: 4878009/010/815

Between 8 am - 12 noon Saturday to Thursday

WANTED

MECHANICS

Following experts are required for repair and maint. of Caterpillar and other heavy equipments:

1. Fuel injection pump specialist.
2. P.S. transmission specialist.
3. General repair mechanic for under chassis.
4. L/H truck general mechanics.

Candidates should have 5 years' minimum experience and transferable residence permit.

For interview pls. tel: 4811035

ABbas AHMAD AL-SHAWAF & BROS CO., W.L.L.
KUWAIT

Copam Microcomputers

Available PCs, PC XT's, PC AT/286, PC AT/386 & computer related products of fair prices. 8088-10 10 MHz 286 16 MHz 386 26 MHz Systems measure small footprint with enhanced features. Guaranteed for a full year.

Timing: 8.30 am - 12.30 pm and 4.00 - 8.00 pm

Showroom located at: Sherg, Khalid Bin Al-Waleed Street, opp. PIC Bldg., Shuker Al-Kazemi Bldg. No. 10, 1st Floor, Flat 7. Tel: 2405991, 2405992, Fax: 4749580

FOR SALE

Boats

SILVER Line, 18 ft, 165 HP, inboard Mercruiser. In very good condition. KD800. Tele. 2449360, 8 am - 12 noon. (AT4-46488-3)

RODAN Hull, 18ft, 115HP engine, complete with trailer. KD1,000. Tele. 3924100. (AT5-46482-3)

NEW Laser speedboats available for immediate delivery, complete with launching trolley, fitted self bailer, and top cover. KD725.000 David Clark (W) 4845171, (D) 2425947. Phillip Shepherd (W) 4841513, (D) 5314957. (AT4-46486-3)

Miscellaneous

KUWAIT City, near Hardees': well furnished single bedroom flat with equipment and tele. for sale. Rent: KD130. Tele. Davis, 2406415. (AT6-46501-3)

HOUSEHOLD items, including bedroom furniture, sofa set and curtains for immediate sale. Owner leaving Kuwait. Tele. 2449360, 8 am - 12 noon. (AT4-46464-3)

CARS

SUZUKI Swift 1.3, 1986 model, red, automatic, 41,000 kms, insured up to 1990 with 4 doors and AC, in good condition. KD1000. KD49 per month by 24 instalments. Tele. 2403260. (AT6-46496-3)

BUICK Park Avenue, 1981 model, black, with 2 doors registered up to February 1990. In good condition. KD800. Tele. 2449360, 8 am - 12 noon. (AT6-46488-3)

MERCEDES 200, 1989, black, complete with options (Bisher Kazemi car), only four weeks on the road, 2000 kms, for quick sale. Tele. 2541894. (AT5-46466-3)

NISSAN Liberty 1985, white, 55,000 kms, automatic, insured up to 24.10.1989 with AC, 4 doors and sunroof, in good condition. KD1,100 or by instalments. Tele. 5385094. (AT6-46496-3)

LIFETIME chance. Don't miss. Double bedroom flat, newly-built, with attached bath, in the heart of the city. (Balji Nagar, Madras) in a peaceful locality with all facilities. Tele. 5620485. (AT6-46462-3)

WANTED

TOYOTA Crown '82-'85 model. Tel. 372824, after 9 am. (AT4-46462-3)

TECHNICS electronic piano organ with stand etc. Four octave model K250, 3 years old, in excellent condition. KD95. Tele. 2410404, after 2 pm. (AT4-46419-3)

MOVING-SALE: cabinet (Italian-made) 2.7m x 3.0m, KD250; dinning-room table and six chairs, KD50; hand-carved screen, KD50; curtains, KD20, and other household items. Tele. 5382931. (AT5-46452-2)

HOUSEHOLD items, including video, 1 AC unit, fridge, washing machine, stereo, dining table, aquarium, etc. in good condition. Tele. Alice, 5642054, after 4 pm. (AT6-46497-2)

SALWA, 2 bedroom apartment 7x5m and 4x5m with 60sqm hall. Newly-furnished with electric appliances and tele. Tele. 5612029. (AT4-46464-3)

PHILIPS washing machine, aquarium, baby items, toys, kitchen items, plants and other things for sale. Tele. 5741318, 10 am - 6 pm. (AT6-46506-3)

CARS

SUZUKI Swift 1.3, 1986 model, red, automatic, 41,000 kms, insured up to 1990 with 4 doors and AC, in good condition. KD1000. KD49 per month by 24 instalments. Tele. 2403260. (AT6-46496-3)

BUICK Park Avenue, 1981 model, black, with 2 doors registered up to February 1990. In good condition. KD800. Tele. 2449360, 8 am - 12 noon. (AT6-46488-3)

HOME furnishings and appliances - bed room set, Godrej cupboard, executive desk and chair, Frigidaire, 3-door refrigerator, Westinghouse, 3-door refrigerator with ice-dispenser, air-conditioner, washing machine. Tele. 2541894. (AT5-46413-3)

LIFETIME chance. Don't miss. Double bedroom flat, newly-built, with attached bath, in the heart of the city. (Balji Nagar, Madras) in a peaceful locality with all facilities. Tele. 5620485. (AT6-46462-3)

WANTED

TOYOTA Crown '82-'85 model. Tel. 372824, after 9 am. (AT4-46462-3)

WANTED URGENTLY

1. Refr. A/C Technician Full time
2. Video, TV, Tape Recorder technician part-time

For details Contact: 2822088, 2616461 from 4 to 9 pm

JAGUAR Coupe GXS '83 model, red, 12 cylinders, imported by Al Zayani, in good condition. KD3,500 ono. Tel. Bou Barak, 5336676, 4843883.

(AT4-MJ-TM-3)

GRAND Prize 1980, fully automatic, 46,000 mileage, insured up to April 1990, in very good condition. KD850. Tele. 2448567, 7am-4pm. (AT5-46461-3)

Computers

IBM compatible computers, 2 available, 1 mono chrome, 1 colour 640K Ram with 2 disk drives. Tele. 2405369, 2-10pm. (AT5-46468-3)

DRIVER required for a Kuwaiti family, full time. Must have transferable residence preferably No. 18 Tele. 5386777, 5380107, 4.30-11pm. (AT5-46453-3)

MAID required immediately. Tele. 4810258. (AT5-46487-3)

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DRIVER required for a Kuwaiti family, full time. Must have transferable residence preferably No. 18 Tele. 5386777, 5380107, 4.30-11pm. (AT5-46487-3)

Indians hit centuries

BASSETTERE, St. Kitts, March 15. (Reuter): Navjot Sidhu and Sanjay Manjrekar hit centuries to boost India to 325 for four in the first innings on the opening day of their match against the West Indies Under-23 Cricket XI yesterday.

Manjrekar scored his first hundred for India in his first first-class innings for his country since he was hit above the eye by West Indian paceman Winston Benjamin on his Test debut in New Delhi in November 1987 and forced to retire hurt.

Sidhu's 114 was the more aggressive, although in the morning he spent 78 minutes over 22.

SPORTS BRIEFS**Figure skating**

PARIS, March 15. (AP): Marina Klimova and Sergei Ponomarenko of the Soviet Union won't their way into the lead of the ice dance event at the World Figure Skating Championships today.

The couple earned top marks of the compulsory section which counts for 20 percent of the total score. The Westminster waltz and the Argentine tango were the two required dances this year.

Second went to another Soviet pair, Maia Usova and Aleksandr Zhulin.

In third were Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay representing France although they were raised in Canada.

Cycling race

OSIMO, Italy, March 15. (AP): France's Charlie Mottet won the sixth and next-to-last stage of the Tirreno-Adriatico cycling race yesterday, springing ahead of Swiss Toni Rominger in this central Italian town.

Rominger, finishing runner-up for the third time in as many days, retained the Blue Jersey of overall leader and widened his advantage over West German Rolf Gollé while Mottet remained in third place in the general standings.

Cheltenham festival

CHELTENHAM, England, March 15. (Reuter): Beech Road, a 50-1 outsider, pulled off one of jump racing's greatest surprises to win the champion hurdle yesterday, the opening day of the three-day Cheltenham festival.

NBA results

NEW YORK, March 15. (Reuter): Results of National Basketball Association (NBA) games played yesterday.

Suns	114	Hawks	112
Pistons	129	Pacers	117
Knicks	116	Supersonics	102
Nuggets	125	Hornets	102
Blazers	139	Warriors	110
Kings	95	Rockets	90

Sheraton bridge

RESULTS of Sheraton Bridge Club game held on Tuesday.

N/S
1. Mrs Mousali & Tawil
2. Mr Sapre & Dr Sead
3. Shanti & Meouchi
E/W
1. Dr Szul & Latala
2. Carsten & Harris
3. G and R & Menon

Drivers busy with final adjustments

Kuwait car rally begins today

By Gall Seery
Arab Times staff

WITH Kuwait's 10th International Rally due to start this afternoon, the drivers have been busy making final adjustments to their cars, preparing their service schedules, and some are still practising the stages.

This rally is the first in quite some time in which the weather could prove a major factor. The rain has left some of the stages very wet indeed, and this will certainly favour the 4wd cars, driven by Mohammed Bin Sulayem, Abbas Al Mousawi, Eid Falah, Tareq Al Alyan and others. Traction has always been a major problem in Kuwait, and this year it is likely to be more of a

problem than ever.

A full rally supplement is contained inside this newspaper and explains all about the National Championships as well as the stages and how to get to them.

Abbas Al Mousawi of Qatar is driving a Mitsubishi Galant with 4wd and 4 wheel steering. This car broke down in Qatar last month, due to a problem with the gear lever, which has now been rectified.

"I can't say how well I will do in Kuwait, but I proved in Qatar that I could keep up with Saeed and Mohammed. I would like to win this rally, but we will have to see what happens. If I find that the times are close and I can do it, then I will go for a win. Otherwise

I will be driving to finish, and pick up points for Group N," he said.

"I haven't driven for two years and have had little time for practice," said Ottmar Lange, a former B-seed who came second in the 1985 Kuwait International Rally. "I have no points to worry about, so we'll wait and see. This is a very fast rally — 15 seconds could cost you a place. If I find our times are competitive, I will push for a win." Lange is sponsored by International Optique.

The rally sponsors are Mahdi Habib Establishment, Messiah Beach Hotel, and of course, the KT Club. Arab Times would like to wish every competitor good luck.

Krickstein upset**Top seeds advance**

INDIAN WELLS, Calif., March 15. (Reuter): Stefan Edberg easily dispatched his opponent but Boris Becker lost his killer instinct for a while and struggled a bit before winning his second-round match in the \$702,000 Indian Wells Grand Prix tennis tournament yesterday.

Becker, the top-seeded West German, scored a 6-3 6-4 victory over unseeded South African lefthander, Danie Visser and Edberg of Sweden, seeded second, eliminated unseeded Horst Skof of Austria 6-4 6-4.

Ninth-seeded Aaron Krickstein was upset 5-7 7-6 (8-6) 7-6 (7-4) by unseeded fellow American, Pete Sampras, in a first-round match.

"A lot of drivers are concentrating on trying to beat Saeed and Mohammed, because we think that maybe our cars can catch them this year," said Wazan. "A lot of drivers are going to break their cars that way. I would remind the local competitors that this is a two day event, and that they should not try to push their car too much too soon."

The Opel Manta 400 is one of the more powerful and reliable Group B cars entered in the rally.

Wazan and co-driver will be the eighth team to start. This is a low seeding for the Marlboro team, who are rather more used to starting in first or second place. This is because of the new ruling from FISA which states that Group B cars must start behind Group A and N competitors. Thus, novice drivers will be starting in front of Wazan.

French soccer

PARIS, March 15. (Reuter): Paris Saint-Germain beat Montpellier 3-2 in a French First Division soccer match yesterday.

Lacatus scored the first two

Sabatini, who beat both Both and Graf to win the title here last year, had the toughest afternoon but finally fought off Etsuko Inoue of Japan 6-2 6-6 6-4 in a second-round match. The top eight seeds had received first-round byes.

Graf, the top-seeded West German, scored a 6-3 6-4 victory over unseeded South African lefthander, Danie Visser and Edberg of Sweden, seeded second, eliminated unseeded Horst Skof of Austria 6-4 6-4.

Ninth-seeded Aaron Krickstein was upset 5-7 7-6 (8-6) 7-6 (7-4) by unseeded fellow American, Pete Sampras, in a first-round match.

Meanwhile, in Boca Raton, Florida, top seeded Steffi Graf, second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina and third-seeded Chris Evert of the United States all began their claim for the \$300,000 women's tennis tournament yesterday.

European Cup soccer

BUCHAREST, March 15. (Reuter): Steaua Bucharest winner Marius Lacatus scored three goals and set up two more to help his team crush IFK Gothenburg of Sweden 5-1 in the return leg of the European Cup quarterfinals today.

The Romanian army team, winners of the trophy in 1986 and semifinalists last season, trailed 1-0 after the first leg in Sweden two weeks ago.

Lacatus scored the first two



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ARAB TIMES

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